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**The Transmission of Cultural Values in the
Production of EFL Textbooks for the Chinese
Primary Curriculum**

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DECLARATION

I, Jingyi Li, hereby certify that this doctoral thesis has been composed by me, that it is my own work and that it has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Signature: Jingyi Li

Date: 22 June 2012

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ABSTRACT

In the global world, cultural issues relating to the subject of English as Foreign Language (EFL) have become important. This is especially the case when considering the EFL curriculum for Chinese Primary Education.

Many writers have addressed the nature of curriculum design as knowledge and cultural reproduction, but usually in the North American and European literature. This research takes these debates and relocates them in the context of China as it enters a new market economy, embedded in its own version of 'internationalism'.

The 2001 national curriculum marked the beginning of China's educational reform. From a reading of this literature, two main questions emerged: 1) what cultural values are transmitted through EFL textbooks for Chinese Primary Education?; 2) how do curriculum-making processes impact upon textbook production? The findings provide an important insight into knowledge and cultural reproduction in Chinese Education, especially in the subject of EFL.

Two volumes of EFL textbooks, which were used in primary schools, were selected to examine the delivery of cultural values. Based on these initial findings, the researcher conducted a series of interviews and focus groups in order to trace the process of textbook production and curriculum creation. Participants included educational administrators in the Ministry of Education in China, curriculum designers, textbook editors from both Chinese and foreign publishers as well as classroom teachers.

Research findings suggest that, the production of EFL textbooks should be recognised as a part of curriculum-making processes in the context of Chinese Primary Education. The 'textbook' can be seen as the 'official' interpretation of the Chinese culture. Indeed, the EFL curriculum is recognized as a vehicle for moral education by policy makers and educators. EFL textbooks include many moral

messages promoting expected behaviour in contemporary China – ‘diligence, independence, respect and obedience, patriotism and collectivism’.

The processes of generating this ‘production’ have spaces for less ‘official’ and more ‘hidden’ curriculum messages. Indeed, ‘lacunae’ – hidden spaces – in EFL curriculum design and textbook production have been identified.

Various key players are involved in the curriculum-making process, including the State, its agencies, and intellectuals. However, instead of being a straight top-down structure led by the political elites, the strict control of the State over curriculum policy-making is finely nuanced. In fact, it was found that the practices of curriculum-making involve a complicated State-intellectuals partnership.

Further, it is mainly the culture of the intellectual group which is reproduced through the EFL subject in Chinese Primary Education. Textbook editors and censors, inherently part of the intellectual elites, and key players in the curriculum designing process, rely heavily upon their own version of ‘common sense’.

This thesis therefore concludes that the ‘hidden spaces’ through which curriculum design, development and delivery take place, generate a more nuanced understanding of Chinese cultural reproduction, than has previously been thought.

CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	ix
INTRODUCTION	1
Structure of thesis	3
Chapter One: Policy and Curriculum - a theoretical approach	6
1.1 Introduction	6
1.2 What is policy? Text and discourse	7
1.2.1 Policy as text	8
1.2.2 Policy as discourse	10
1.3 Educational policy and curriculum	12
1.3.1 Curriculum	14
<i>Curriculum, knowledge and culture</i>	16
<i>A common curriculum</i>	18
<i>School knowledge</i>	19
1.3.2 Curriculum policy making	21
1.3.3 Curriculum in a global context	24
<i>The creation of a global context</i>	25
<i>Autonomy in the global context</i>	29
1.4 Conclusion	31
Chapter Two: Education Policy and Curriculum in China	32
2.1 Introduction	32
2.2 Education policy and curriculum in China	33
2.2.1 Education policy in China	33
<i>Beginning of the modern educational system in China</i>	33
<i>Pre-1949</i>	35
<i>1949-1957</i>	36
<i>1958-1965</i>	37
<i>1966-1976</i>	38
<i>1977-1984</i>	39
<i>1985-1989</i>	40
<i>1990-2003</i>	41
<i>2003-Now</i>	42
2.2.2 Curriculum development in China	43
<i>1992 national curriculum</i>	46

2001 national curriculum reform	49
2.3 Characters of Chinese education	51
2.3.1 The role of moral education and its focus	51
<i>Political loaded education</i>	52
<i>Depoliticised moral education in national curriculum</i>	54
2.3.2 The balance between 'mass education' and 'elite education'	56
1949-1965	57
1966-1976	58
Post 1978-now	58
2.4 Conclusion	61
Chapter Three: EFL Curriculum in China	62
3.1 Introduction	62
3.2 Language and culture	63
3.3 Teaching English as other language	64
3.3.1 Teaching English as foreign Language	66
3.3.2 Teaching English as second Language	67
3.3.3 Intercultural communicative approach to English language teaching	68
3.4 English curriculum in China	73
3.4.1 Soviet influence: 1949-1960	75
3.4.2 Towards an economic modernisation: 1961-1966	77
3.4.3 Cultural Revolution: 1967-1976	79
3.4.4 Modernisation under Open Door Policy: 1977-1992	80
1978 syllabus	80
1982 syllabus	82
3.4.5 Integrating with globalisation: 1993 onwards	83
3.4.6 2001 EFL curriculum	86
3.5 Conclusion	89
Chapter Four: Methodology	91
4.1 Introduction	91
4.2 Research design	92
4.3 Data collection	94
4.3.1 Textbook analysis	94
4.3.2 Interviews	96
<i>Educational administrators and curriculum designers</i>	98
<i>Textbook editors and writers</i>	100
<i>Classroom teachers</i>	101
4.3.3 Ethical considerations and challenges in data collection	102
<i>Informed consent and confidentiality</i>	102
<i>Challenges in elite interviews</i>	102
4.4 Data analysis	104
4.5 Conclusion	107

Chapter Five: Textbook Analysis Findings	108
5.1 Introduction	108
5.2 The design of textbook	109
5.3 Framework of textbook analysis	112
5.4 Textbook analysis findings	118
5.4.1 Confucian philosophy of education	120
<i>In family</i>	120
<i>In schools</i>	121
<i>In community</i>	122
5.4.2 Patriotism	124
<i>National identity</i>	124
<i>National pride</i>	125
5.4.3 Respect and obedience	127
5.4.4 Diligence	131
5.4.5 Independence	133
5.4.6 Collectivism	133
5.4.7 Gender role	137
<i>Children's gender identity in textbooks</i>	140
<i>Adults' gender in career</i>	141
<i>Parenthood: Mum, always mum</i>	142
5.5 Conclusion	145
Chapter Six: Field Work Findings	146
6.1 Introduction	146
6.2 Cultural value transmission	146
6.2.1 Confucian philosophy of education	149
<i>Patriotism</i>	152
<i>Respect and obedience</i>	154
<i>Diligence</i>	155
<i>Independence</i>	156
<i>Collectivism</i>	156
6.2.2 Gender roles	157
6.2.3 Middle class and urban trends textbooks	158
6.3 Textbooks: their relation to the curriculum	159
6.3.1 Curriculum design	159
6.3.2 Textbook production	161
6.4 Production of school knowledge and cultural reproduction	164
6.4.1 Whose knowledge?	164
<i>The 'national movement' of curriculum reform</i>	165
<i>Inequalities in urban and rural development</i>	169
6.4.2 Knowledge production and cultural reproduction through textbook design	172
<i>Intellectuals</i>	175
<i>Intellectuals as practitioners of knowledge production and cultural reproduction</i>	175
<i>The practice of 'common sense' in local cultural reproduction</i>	178
6.5 Cultural globalization	181

6.5.1	Social control and local reproduction of knowledge	186
6.5.2	Social control in EFL textbook production	188
6.5.3	'Common sense' in cultural value transmission	193
6.6	Conclusion	200
Chapter Seven: Conclusion – Lacunas in EFL Curriculum Making		201
7.1	Introduction	201
7.2	Policy-making for EFL curriculum: a State-Intellectual partnership	203
7.3	The State's leading role	205
7.4	Scholars: curriculum designers	209
7.5	Textbook editors and writers	210
7.5.1	State control over education and intellectuals' autonomy	214
7.5.2	Flow of foreign culture and Chinese editors'/writers' interpretation	216
7.6	Conclusion	219
Bibliography		220
Appendix 1:	Interview Topic Guide – Educational Administrators and Curriculum Designers	241
Appendix 2:	Interview Topic Guide – Textbook Editors and Writers	243
Appendix 3:	Interview Topic Guide - Teachers	244
Appendix 4:	Sample of a Complete Coding Sheet	245
Appendix 5:	Interview Sample 1	248
Appendix 6:	Interview Sample 2	260

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CCCCPC	Central Committee of the Communist Party of China
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CCYL	Chinese Communist Youth League
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CPC	Communist Party of China
CTMRO	Curriculum and Teaching Materials Research Institute
DBE One & Two	Department of Basic Education One & Two
DCD	Division of Curriculum Development
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELF	English as a lingua franca
EQO	Essential-qualities-oriented education
ESL	English as a Second Language
ICC	Intercultural communicative competence
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
KMT	Kuo Min Tang
MoE	Ministry of Education
NDES	New Democracy Education System
NDRC	Development and Reform Commission
NCCT	National Centre for Curriculum and Textbook Development
NECPSST	National Evaluation Committee of Primary and Secondary School Textbooks
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NV English	New Version of Primary English
ODA	Official Development Assistant Programme

PEP	People's Education Press
PEP English	PEP Primary English
PRC	People's Republic of China
ROC	Republic of China
SEC	State Educational Commission
SNP	Singapore National Printers Pet Ltd.
STEAC	State Textbooks Examination and Approval Committee
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States
WTO	World Trade Organisation

Introduction

In the summer of 2004, I came to Britain, specifically to Beeston in Nottinghamshire. It was my first trip outside Asia. Even today, the memory of that visit remains fresh in my mind. On my arrival, I took a walk around the quiet town. Everything looked so surreal. It was not because it was alien from home in Beijing; but I was wondering – “where are all those people in black coats with umbrellas?” After all, this is the image of English people in my Chinese English language textbooks. These books, a major part of my education in Beijing, had encouraged a view of English people which I found difficult to relate to what was actually in Britain.

I was not disappointed, just surprised, because the reality that I saw on the British streets, did not match my expectations. After years of living in Britain, I cannot help thinking how little I knew about this country and its culture before I travelled here. Even today, I am still learning about Britain.

It has made me realise just how important the many and various textbook messages, in particular from textbooks, young students still receive during their school experiences. How do they acquire knowledge of other cultures? How do they come to know not just the English language, but all those cultural nuances which make living in a society so incredibly interesting yet problematic?

With all these thoughts, my attention turned to the changes happening to the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curriculum in China. English language is one of the core subjects in primary schools. Children in many schools start to learn English from their 3rd grade. In some major cities, such as Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin, primary schools may offer English lessons from 1st grade. However, the quality of the EFL subject was always criticised as being too text-oriented and inefficient. In 2001, China drafted a new EFL curriculum for Basic Education. It targeted the comprehensive improvement of students’ communicative competence. This meant

that students should have linguist knowledge, as well as social knowledge about how to use the English language to conduct a communication successfully. This requires a good understanding of other cultures. Therefore, efforts were put into the development of pupils' cultural awareness. For example, a number of foreign cultural elements, such as food, customs and places of interest, were added to the teaching materials.

Given these concerns, I became fascinated with the apparent juxtaposition of life in Britain, the language used in Britain and its portrayal in EFL textbooks being used in Chinese primary schools. In fact, this research is a result of those initial thoughts and considerations. The research became formulated into a particular concern about the cultural values which are being transmitted through the EFL textbooks. Specifically, I wondered: *has the national EFL textbook developed as a medium for the transmission of cultural values?*

In answering that question, by recognizing the important interrelation between culture and language, and curriculum and culture, I found myself also addressing other research based issues:

- 1) *How are cultural values transmitted through textbooks?*
- 2) *How is textbook design affected by curriculum policy within the context of Chinese Primary Education?*

I was aware that language reflects culture. Native speakers' language behaviours are heavily influenced by their cultural background. Throughout the study of a foreign language, students will be inescapably exposed to other cultures.

However, it is also a selective process. In other words, not all aspects of language knowledge and native culture are presented through the study of the English language. What is transmitted through the EFL subject depends on how the curriculum is produced.

Therefore, it is important to recognize that curriculum making is a process of knowledge and cultural reproduction usually conducted by certain social groups. As with other policies, curriculum can be understood as discourse, which implies a series of socially constructed positions. The launch of a new policy signifies a ‘new dominant discourse’ created through a series of struggles and compromises. The creation of a national curriculum represents such a power dynamic. School knowledge, the main outcome of the curriculum, is frequently created through competition amongst interest groups. In practice, school knowledge is presented mainly by teaching materials – or in the case of China, the national textbooks.

Thus, the empirical part of this research began with exploring the national EFL textbooks used in Chinese primary school classrooms. In identifying the cultural values in these textbooks, it was possible to develop an understanding about the outcomes - or products - of cultural reproduction. By tracing how they are formed through textbook and curriculum production, an insight is provided into the power dynamics behind decision making processes.

In many ways this thesis, whilst it provides an examination of textbook design and production, is fundamentally concerned with policy making processes and the culturally significant inclusions in the EFL curriculum.

Structure of thesis

This research therefore addresses a range of theoretical, substantive and empirical concerns. It has its background in education policy making, with a focus on curriculum design and development. There are many contested approaches to curriculum development, and these are addressed in the context of the production of a Chinese Primary School. There is evidence, through the study of the textbooks themselves, that further integration of the creation of cultural image and transmission of cultural values would be helpful. This led to a period in China when interviews took place.

In terms of the structure itself, Chapter One establishes a theoretical framework of educational policy and curriculum. It defines policy from the perspectives of both text and discourse. Then, it discusses the nature of curriculum policy as a reproduction of knowledge and culture; and identifies the importance of recognising the power dynamic in curriculum making processes.

Chapter Two and Three provide a review of the development of educational policy and the EFL curriculum in China. They narrate the view that Moral Education is recognised and emphasised by educators in China. These two chapters also demonstrate the strong interrelation between educational policy and curriculum and its social and political contexts. The roles of some key players in curriculum making, known as the State and intellectuals, are identified.

Based on the literature review provided in the first three chapters, Chapter Four outlines the research questions and the methods used in this research. Data is collected through an analysis of EFL textbooks and interviews and focus groups with people who were involved in the production of textbooks and curriculum.

Research findings are presented in the next two chapters. Chapter Five provides the findings of textbook analysis. It is indicated that several cultural values were transmitted through EFL textbooks including, the Confucian philosophy of education, patriotism, respect and obedience, diligence, independence, collectivism and gender role. These results provide a focus of the further empirical work. Directed by these concepts, interviews were conducted. The data collected explores how cultural values were transmitted through the production of the EFL textbooks and curriculum.

In Chapter Six, the research findings were presented through four dimensions: cultural value transmission in textbooks; the relations between the national curriculum and textbooks; production of school knowledge and cultural reproduction; and the transmission of cultural values in the era of cultural globalization. It is indicated that, textbook design in China should be recognised as a part of curriculum making, although the design of a textbook is guided by the national curriculum.

Rather than following a top-down approach, in the process of both curriculum and textbook production, the intellectual group plays a vital role in the processes. Their 'common sense', their implicit, understanding of what should be taught through Primary School EFL textbooks was, to a large extent, reproduced through the EFL curriculum.

Following this discussion, Chapter Seven concludes this research by identifying hidden spaces – lacunae- in the production of the EFL textbooks and curriculum in China. It argues that whilst China's curriculum policy-making is certainly not 'bottom-up', there are opportunities for intellectuals to play a profoundly important part in the production process. The State remains its overarching power, while in fact pressures from the side group- intellectuals- are possible and may be becoming more evident.

Chapter One: Policy and Curriculum – a theoretical approach

1.1 Introduction

Over the past ten years, education has changed in most countries worldwide. In many ways, these changes relate to the age at which children learn or the methods by which they learn, and the acquisition of English as a second language. But for some countries, curriculum design has been the most noticeable change. The People's Republic of China (PRC) is one of these countries.

In 2001, the Chinese State Council launched a curriculum reform which clarified the central position of students' development. The main purpose of this reform was to achieve 'the renaissance of the Chinese nation and the comprehensive development of individuals'. To reach this goal, competence-oriented education was stressed through curriculum reform.

Based upon this policy change, this research explores the practice of curriculum formulation in the context of Chinese Primary Education.

By taking the subject of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Primary Education as a starting point, this research will investigate the process and outcome of the transmission of cultural values in textbooks, in order to study the power relations embedded in the curriculum process.

As a start, this chapter provides a theoretical foundation for educational policy and curriculum. First of all, 'policy' is defined conceptually from the perspective of 'policy as text' and 'policy as discourse'. Secondly, this chapter looks at the characters of educational policy and curriculum, discusses the nature of knowledge

(which is a main concern in the curriculum process) and identifies the power dynamic in the curriculum making process, particularly within a globalized context.

1.2 What is policy? Text and discourse

Through investigation of the process and outcome of cultural value transmission in EFL textbooks, this research explores the practice of curriculum policy formulation in the context of Chinese Primary Education. To begin this exploration, it is necessary to define conceptually what the research means by ‘policy’.

Over 30 years ago, policies may have been characterised as sets of laws or normative guidelines. Operating within a traditional framework, Harman (1984, p13) defined policy as:

“...the implicit or explicit specification of courses of purposive action being followed or to be followed in dealing with a recognized problem or matter of concern and directed towards the accomplishment of some intended or desired set of goals. Policy also can be thought of as a position or stance developed in response to a problem or issue of conflict, and directed towards a particular objective.”

This definition reveals the policy’s outward appearance – its authorization. However, it was criticized for giving the impression that there is general agreement when policies are generated and that they are implemented in a straightforward and unproblematic way. Slightly more recently, Dye (1992) argued that this kind of traditional view is one of the simplest definitions of policy. ‘Government generated policies, which are developed and implemented through state bureaucracies.’ Every single policy is produced in a certain society or social context. A society consists of competing groups having different values and access to power. Although, in certain periods, there tends to be a single group which takes the dominant place, none of the improvements of any society are straightforward; they develop in a spiral shape through competition and compromise between various interest groups.

A policy, therefore, can be studied from several angles: policy making, policy implementation and policy outcomes. These stages are, in fact, interactive. Meanwhile, there are some key roles in a policy process, that of the policy maker, policy user and policy receiver. Certain persons or groups may take multiple roles at the same time. Each of these role players, in some way, contributes to the policy's outcome.

Thus, a policy is far more complicated than its content. It has been recognized that policy is an on-going process. As Ball (1993) noted, policies should not only be understood as 'things'; they are also processes and outcomes, or, in other words, they can be seen as both texts and discourses.

1.2.1 Policy as text

A policy can be viewed as text; however, it should not be read by its subjects only. In fact, Offe (1984) pointed out that practice and the results of policy cannot be simply read-off from texts: they are the outcome of conflict and compromise between interests groups in context. Ball (1993, 2006) described policies as representations which are both encoded and decoded in complex ways, summarized in two different stages: policy making and policy implementation.

First of all, policies are created as products of compromises among various interest groups, through power dynamics between them. They are rarely the work of individual authors. Those who participate in policy making can be governmental and non-governmental bodies, or elites and grassroots actors. For example, a study on the Western Australian Curriculum Framework found that policy partnerships achieved through both "collaboration between interests groups" and "consultation by the policy elites with grassroots policy actors in schools" (Griffiths, Vidovich and Chapman, 2009, p197). It could be argued that these different patterns of policy making do not mean that power can be excluded.

Secondly, to put policies into practice, they must be interpreted by actors in context. As Ball (1993, 2006) noted, the shift of policy meanings may occur due to the change of politics, representations and key interpreters. Policy is always an on-going process. The shaping processes of policies and their outcomes are always influenced by a prior history of significant events, a particular ideological and political climate and the social and economic context. For example, where policies enter fields in which patterns of inequality exist, the outcomes may be presented differently.

Ball (2006, p21) pointed out that:

“Policies do not normally tell you what to do, they create circumstances in which the range of options available in deciding what to do are narrowed, or changed, or particular goals or outcomes are set.”

This generates an understanding that it is important not to identify policy solely with a set of texts. Problems, policy makers, policy texts and policy readers all have histories. The problems faced by the State may vary depending on the particular time and place in which it seeks to implement policies. Those dealing with similar issues have their own influence inside the State, while their purposes and intentions can be re-oriented over time. The changing context makes the task of anticipating policy outcomes harder; meanwhile, it is also vital to consider the changing of context in policy making.

Thirdly, other interventions also exist in the process of policy implementation. In written form, policies may not be read first hand by every user. It is not uncommon to have key mediators (i.e. head teachers) of policy who are relied upon by others to relate policy to context (Wallace, 1988; Bowe, Ball and Gold 1992 and Ball 1993). Thus, Ball (1993) argued that, consequently, certain policy texts may be undermined or generate mass confusion.

As Ball (1993, p12) stated:

“Policies do not normally tell you what to do; they create circumstances in which the range of options available in deciding what to do are narrowed or changed”.

Thus, Ball argues policy texts should be localised. A response to a policy problem must be constructed in context. Policy users may be active; however, if their readings and reactions are not constructed in their own contexts; textual interventions of policies into practice may still occur.

1.2.2 Policy as discourse

From the above, it can be seen that individual views about policy change over time. As mentioned earlier, policy is understood as a complex, often social practice, especially a practice of power. Most recently, the policy process has been full of control, competition and compromise between various interest groups. In this process, power is practised through discourse, which is not only about the way people speak. Discourse presupposes an implicit view of a normative cultural model of how things are (Levinson, Sutton and Winstead, 2009). Ball (1993, p14) indicated that, besides the content of a speech or thought, discourse is also about *“who can speak, when, where and within what authority”*. The uses of propositions and words are socially constructed. A speech carries meanings, but most importantly it reveals the constructed knowledge and power relations embedded in the text. This is why Ball (1993, p14) commented that

“We do not speak a discourse, it speaks us...we do not ‘know’ what we say, we ‘are’ what we say and do”.

Language and its use are shaped socially. Fairclough (1992, p63) notes that *“language is a form of social practice, rather than a purely individual activity or a reflex of situation variables.”* Discourse as social practice, is implicated in various orientations: economic, political, cultural and ideological. It establishes and changes power relations in which ideologies may be *“constituted, naturalized, sustained and changed”* as outcomes of discursive practice. As discourse, a policy reveals a series

of constructed positions and a set of values. In the above there is plenty of struggle and compromise involved in the process; policies are about decisions and actions that allocate the values closely connected to authority. As Ball (1990) believes, policies are claimed with authority, which in fact represents the benefit of those interest groups winning the policy process competition.

Discourse is not only shaped and constrained by social structure, it is also a 'social constructive'. It contributes to (a) the construction of social identities; (b) social relationships between people; and (c) construction of systems of knowledge and belief (Fairclough, 1992). For interest groups, the main goal of policy making is to obtain as many benefits as possible for themselves. It can be achieved by struggling over meaning or discourse. In a way, policies can be seen as the cultural-textual expression of a political practice. To follow this logic, the launch of a policy means the creation of a 'new dominant discourse'.

In order for a policy to be formulated, there must be a will to make policy. In general, such a will can be shaped through both a top-down approach (which is promoted by the authorized agencies) and a bottom-up approach (which is encouraged by grassroots factors). However, regardless how a will to make policy is pursued, policy formulation is conceived as a practice of power.

To gain a better insight into the practice of power, it is important to discuss the players involved in the policy making process. Policies may be authorized or backed up by enforced mechanisms of government, or developed outside the agencies that are constitutionally charged with making policy (Levinson, Sutton and Winstead, 2009). Policy elites such as political actors, administrators and legislators, may be charged with policy making. Meanwhile, grassroots policy actors, for example school teachers in the educational field, may also be involved in policy making.

In terms of policy elites, the complex relationship between the State and the government has drawn much attention from researchers. If we imagine that the government takes the role of a bridge which stands right in the middle of the State

and interest groups, the government has moved towards centres of economic power, especially in modern, democratic societies. Thus, the fact that different governments, who represent their interest groups, take turns to hold a politically dominant position leads, to more complications in the process and development of policy making. Instead of a unitary entity, the State consists of a large number of entities which often have conflicting interests. As noted previously, some interest groups have more political influence in policy processes than others. In contrast, the State is not a straightforward instrument for the interest groups external to it. Offe (1975) notes that the role of the State in capitalist societies is a set of institutions, which has to balance tensions between the need to ensure that the economy continues to grow and the need for the State to respond to political and democratic demands. In his view, the State can never totally 'solve' this problem, but can be a 'guardian angel' of the capitalist economic process and the chosen instrument for protecting society. The normal way is to seek settlements between the 'accumulation' and 'legitimation' functions of the State.¹

As with any other policy, educational policy is a plan or course of action which includes a government's expressed intentions and official enactments, and is designed by the government or a power group to influence and determine decisions, actions and other matters. Meanwhile, the education policy has special character due to its 'subject' and 'object'. It will be discussed in the following sections.

1.3 Educational policy and curriculum

Education is a preparation for life. It encompasses the imparting of knowledge and positive personal development. It is not only a process of teaching and learning, but also a transition of knowledge and culture between one generation and another.

Education is a continuous and creative process for acquiring knowledge. The education of an individual human begins at birth and continues throughout life. It happens in both formal and informal ways such as educational effects from family,

¹ Although written in 1975, such insight is still very relevant today, nearly forty years later.

schooling, and influence of a community and the mass media. It is a social activity with social purposes. The purpose of education is not only to develop the capacities of human beings, but also to coordinate their expression for the development and transformation of society by equipping people with knowledge and an understanding of spiritual and material issues.

In some senses education clearly affects the course of social development, as in the progress of technology. At certain moments in history, it also acts as a powerful instrument for profound social transformation. For example, education is one of the many things that always change with political transition and social movement.

Owing to education's important role in promoting social transformation, it is always paid high attention by the government. In the critical approach to policy research, which emerged in the 1980s, education policy was emphasised as a political process in which dominant groups order an education system to best meet their own interests. It is used as a political system to deal with a public problem, which should be viewed in context. Just like other policies, education policy is not a static concept but is fluid, and changes with circumstances such as the state of the economy, politics, culture and ideology.

In fact these macro concerns of political-economy have become exceptionally important in the writings of Apple (1982) and Ball (1993), and more recently Ozga and Lingard (2007). Based on Gramsci and Foucault²'s theory, these authors have developed approaches to understand education policy. They argue that policy research is mainly concerned with the structure of the education system and its management. However, education policy differs slightly from other social policies in the relations between its 'subject' and 'object'. Besides its character as a social service, education is also responsible for individuals' development. Thus a practical, a psychological extension exists at the end of the educational resources and opportunities provisions. Here, curriculum takes a place as a bridge between the principles and practices in the educational field.

² Gramsci and Foucault both recognize the power in society. They believe that, power and knowledge are interwoven. 'Truth' is related to control by a group over the political, economic, institutional means.

1.3.1 Curriculum

In a way, curriculum may be considered as the most important educational issue, as it includes the content of both learning and teaching. The question “what is curriculum?” has been broadly researched by academics and educators and various definitions of curriculum have been given.

A narrow definition of curriculum would limit it to the content of what is taught. For example, the National Curriculum enacted in the United Kingdom in 1988, prescribed the curriculum in terms of three core and seven foundational subjects, including specific content and specific goals for student achievement in each subject. Here, curriculum is defined as ‘permanent’ subjects that embody essential knowledge.

Another view is that curriculum is the whole of educational study, including all planned and other kinds of learning, which are either accidental, unplanned, or may even be quite undesirable.

Is curriculum only about subjects that embody essential knowledge? Does it concern all planned learning for which the school is responsible, or learning experiences for individuals? The answer is far more complicated than ‘yes’ or ‘no’. As long ago as 1983, Lawton (1983) mentioned that curriculum includes much more than plans for instruction. For dealing with the above issues, the disciplines of philosophy, sociology, psychology and history are usually drawn upon.

Over the decade in which Kelly (1999, 2004) has been researching curriculum issues, she has indicated four principles in curriculum planning. Firstly, it is important to consider curriculum as a whole rather than a collection of separate subjects. Secondly, it is necessary to distinguish between the planned curriculum and the received curriculum. The planned curriculum is what lies in syllabuses, while the received curriculum is the reality of the pupils’ experience. Kelly (1999) noted that the planned and received curriculum should be allocated equal concern in curriculum planning. Thirdly, the ‘hidden curriculum’ was emphasized to draw educators’ attention to the things which pupils unconsciously learn at school; because of the

way in which the work of a school is planned and organized and though the material provided, but which are not in themselves included in the written curriculum. Fourthly, it is necessary to recognize the distinction between the formal curriculum (which comprises the formal activities allocated in the period of teaching) and the informal curriculum (which usually involves activities provided on a voluntary basis, such as at lunch time or after school hours).

Lawton (1983) considered that there is actually a difference between curriculum studies and curriculum development. In fact, theoretical research about curriculum and practical curriculum design are by no means the same process. Curriculum studies are partly historical, partly philosophical, sociological and psychological, and therefore much wider than curriculum development. As such, curriculum studies are parasitic upon what are often regarded as the foundation disciplines in education. It is argued that curriculum theory should precede curriculum planning, but in practice this is not usually what happens. Curriculum development takes place for a variety of motives including individuals or groups such as teachers, students, academics and politicians who are dissatisfied about what is being taught. Also, curriculum development can be effected by social change and movement. Educationists then looked at the results obtained by existing curricula and indicated their dissatisfaction, and then proceeded to set to work on improving them.

In 'classical humanism' theory, education is understood as acquiring pure, or the most valued, knowledge. An aspect at teaching is the initiating of students into traditional culture. The curriculum is organised to transmit a fixed understanding of established disciplines. According to classical humanism educational theory, education is completed by teaching students subjects which include a range of selected 'important' knowledge. Lawton argued that the essential feature of classical humanist ideology is that it associates traditional culture and values with a small minority group. In this case, only certain subjects which were regarded as high status and character training were the curricular goals. Although classical humanism is no longer acceptable as an ideology in most societies due to the development of

democracy and equality of opportunity since the onset of the industrial revolution, 'knowledge' remains a primary concern in curriculum studies.

Curriculum, knowledge and culture

If we decide to teach knowledge rather than something else, it is necessary to be aware of some points - which are always questioned in this theory - concerning 'what is the nature of knowledge' or 'what is valued knowledge'?

Foucault (1979, 1980) offers the concept of 'discourse' which disputed the importance of distinguishing between what is 'true or false' in studies of knowledge. He argues that truth is a product of discourse because knowledge and power directly imply one another. Agreeing with Foucault, Fairclough (2000, p155) notes,

"All we have are different representations of reality, drawing on different discourse."

In Foucault's view, 'knowledge' does not exist in any 'political vacuum area' while knowledge is also described as 'subjugated knowledge'. Fairclough (2001) notes that, knowledge is socially constructed in discursive practices, which maintain power relations. Power is then one of the conditions for producing 'knowledge'. However, this view should not be taken to mean that 'if all knowledge is related to power, there is actually no such thing as truth, because the logic for such inference is actually based on the point that Foucault refuted at the very beginning: truth must be free of power. It is necessary to question scientific knowledge, but it does not mean that all human scientific truth is untruth. Foucault states that the relationship between power and knowledge is constant and highly organized. Thus, the relationship itself will not undermine the epistemological validity of the human scientific truth. Foucault states that the role of the intellectual in a contemporary society is not to correct the ideology which accompanies scientific practice, but to ascertain or ensure the possibility of constituting a new politics of truth. Again, it does not mean that knowledge could be ideologically free. However, Foucault indicates that

'knowledge' should be detached from the current hegemony. Even if this ideal world of free speech could exist, it is doubtful now successfully it could be developed. As Nozaki (2006) said, Foucault's view clarifies the problem in the relationship between hegemony and the regime of truth.

Foucault (1980) identified two kinds of knowledge: erudite knowledge and local memories. The former is a knowledge which takes the dominant place in history studies and is revealed by erudite and specialized scholarship and criticism. The latter is a whole set of knowledge which is locally based and popular, but which has been disqualified as inadequate for their task. As mentioned above, there is a need for 'detaching' the counter-hegemony from knowledge, but also 'bridging' between knowledge, memories, and voices of the socially subordinated; scientific truths are required due to the tension between them. Also, the way and the context in which we can harmonize tension between these two kinds of knowledge are always questioned on both a theoretical and a practical level.

Curriculum planning is a process of knowledge production. As noted earlier, knowledge represents the 'culture' of a certain group. Thus, while knowledge is produced, it is in fact the 'culture' of a certain group that is selected and made available in education. In other words, curriculum planning is also a process of 'cultural reproduction'. According to Lawton (1983)'s view, curriculum planning consists of two parts: culture selection-based subject planning and school-based planning for a common curriculum.

Culture is a sum total of learned behaviour shared by the members of a society. Before the coming of industrialisation and democracy in most of the world, there was the culture of the aristocratic upper classes. There was also folk or popular culture for 'ordinary people'. Based on this understanding of culture, Bantock (1975) suggested that, rather than a common curriculum, there should be two kinds of curriculum: a high-culture curriculum and a totally different 'non-literary' curriculum. To support his view, Bantock (1975) explained that there is a tradition that working-class children are not really suited to academic education. This view was criticised by

certain individuals who disagreed that people could be put into two such rigid categories. Bantock (1975)'s view can be seen as representative of the pre-industrial society, or one of the weapons used by the upper class to keep themselves distant from the masses, in order to hold their position and power.

When Lawton (1983) mentioned culture selection, he did not mean that curriculum should be restricted to 'high culture', which is identified as a minority-taste culture, including certain kinds of interests and activities, such as classical music, literature and art. In many ways, his view is influenced by the 'reconstruction theory', in which education is seen as a way to improve society, embodying one of the desires of democratic society, as well as acting as a method to achieve the ideal democratic society. For individuals, education provides the opportunity to obtain self-development in a modern society. It is suggested by educational writers (Cohen, 2007 and Becker, 2009), that the quality of society will improve alongside an individual's growth. For example, in general, for individuals, more schooling means a higher lifetime income; meanwhile educational achievement has impact on the quality of human capital and economic growth of a society (UNESCO, 2010).

A common curriculum

The question of whether there should be a centrally determined common curriculum in all schools has been debated for a long time. First of all, there is a philosophical argument on the content of a common curriculum. As mentioned, in the relationship between power and knowledge, certain kinds of knowledge have a value superior to others. Kelly (1999) noted the prior claim for this 'valuable' knowledge lies in any curriculum regarded as educational. To some extent, a 'common curriculum' would offer education to pupils whose curriculum excludes them from certain areas of human knowledge or understanding. However, it is doubtful that a 'common curriculum', which suits the needs of all pupils in a certain culture, is possible.

Secondly, Kelly pointed out that the social argument focuses on the idea of equality of educational opportunities and the individual development of any pupil. This

argument implied that education provision should be based upon the interests of children, in order to make school work meaningful and relevant to their experiences. However, under such a view, children might be blocked in their own cultural environment and given little opportunity to gain experience outside of it. Logically, there is no incompatibility between the equality of educational opportunities and the variety of educational provision. In other words, with the consideration of individual development, a ‘balanced curriculum’ is demanded in curriculum planning. Kelly (1999, p204) noted that,

‘...the need for balance must be recognized not only within education but also between education and the other demands that the schools must respond to’.

Here, the other demands may include things like the conflict between the interests of individuals and those of society, and the needs of the individual for both personal and vocational preparation. In this case, Kelly suggested that a good deal of freedom in curriculum planning should be offered to local educational authorities, schools, teachers or even individual pupils.

Indeed, it is possible that a curriculum can be designed in context to suit the needs of educators and learners. However, its character remains as a means of power control. In a way, such a power control or power dynamic is represented by the content of curriculum- school knowledge.

School knowledge

It is rather clear that knowledge, especially school knowledge, is not value free. On the contrary, it is an outcome of the power dynamic. To follow Foucault (1980)’s theory, school knowledge is more likely to fit into the first type – erudite knowledge, which is often officially approved within a period.

Apple (1993, p65) noted that:

“While there is a formal right for everyone to be represented in the debates over whose cultural capital, whose knowledge ‘that’, ‘how,’ and ‘to,’ will be declared legitimate for transmission to future generations of students, it is still the case that a selective tradition operates in which only specific groups’ knowledge becomes official knowledge.’

The production of school knowledge is a selecting process of cultural reproduction among social groups. In fact, school knowledge is not ‘produced’, but ‘reproduced’ through a cultural selection process, which is bound by power relations. It means that not all parties in a society can make their knowledge public. Apple (1993) noted that the opportunity for cultural reproduction is partly dependent upon economic and political conditions. However, as the practice of power, education policy and curriculum making are full of struggles and compromises; the product of these practices, knowledge, emerges from power relations. It is not only the cultural-textual representation of the dominant groups; voices from other groups may be heard as a result of compromises.

Since it is school knowledge which is declared to be available to all, it is subject to scrutiny by official bodies. It is suggested that the State plays a vital role in this selection activity, since education has become a crucial means to control the symbolic resources in a society.

As mentioned above, the production of school knowledge is a power dynamic among interest groups. It is a process with conflict and compromises. It is not always a top-down process. In the authority over the field of symbolic control, the State does not always support only the knowledge of dominant groups. It rather acts as an ‘umbrella’, as Apple (1993) described, to cover as many interest groups as possible. However, the framework of such an ‘umbrella’ is still formed by the guiding principles of dominant groups. For example, the dominant groups may need to allow a certain level of ‘varieties’, in order to seek the maximum support from other groups on their public policies.

Therefore, the official knowledge is a compromised knowledge. It is the outcome of a process of political considerations and decision making, the nature of which affect what knowledge is selected, and thereafter taught in school. Bernstein (1977) called the State one of the ‘recontextualizing agents’ in this process of knowledge selection, as well as cultural reproduction. Thus, under the ‘umbrella’ of a State, knowledge is taken out of its original context and ‘recontextalized’ by political rule, in other words, the guiding principles of the dominant groups, and transformed within a new political context.

Aside from the State, there are other parties involved in the production of school knowledge which act as recontextualizing agents, such as local educational authorities and textbook publishers. Therefore, in curriculum research, to ascertain ‘whose knowledge’ constitutes the textbooks, an insight into the curriculum process, the various players involved and its power dynamic is necessary. Clarification of ‘whose knowledge’ is presented in schooling will contribute to the understanding of the curriculum process.

Textbook production is a good angle from which to investigate such a ‘recontextualizing process’ of knowledge production. In classrooms, textbooks act as the primary carriers of school knowledge. A study of textbooks will provide evidence on ‘what knowledge is produced in education’. In this case, the production of textbooks is a process of demonstrating ‘how knowledge is made into content for school’. Thus, an investigation into this process may reveal the principles of ‘recontextualizing agents’ and the power dynamics of the production of school knowledge.

1.3.2 Curriculum policy making

It has been argued that, as with any other policies, curriculum policy process is a practice of power. Indeed, researches show that discourses of ‘policy partnership’ and ‘communities of practice’ have become increasingly prevalent in contemporary

curriculum policy (Griffiths, Vidovich and Chapman, 2009). They reveal the relationships between policy actors, including politicians, administrators, educational leaders, teachers and policy receivers (i.e. parents and students).

A contemporary view of policy partnership defines partners as representatives from public, business and civil constituencies at various levels – national, regional or local. They can be involved in policy making and, most importantly, engaged in the power relationships within it. As Griffiths, Vidovich and Chapman (2009) note, as a result of this policy partnership, the common societal aim may be pursued through combining their resources and competences, but also through the practice of competition and compromise.

Although non-authorized actors are involved, the State often retains its leading role in curriculum policy making. The policy processes and outcomes may still be heavily controlled by the State. A policy network is often created, in which agencies are regulated by the states and represent various interest groups. Most importantly, the policy agendas may be under state control through selectively empowering different groups of policy actors (Griffiths, Vidovich and Chapman, 2009). Besides the exercise of power over policy processes and outcomes, the state control may also be achieved in other ways, including the wills of powerful individual policy actors, selection of policy actors and the production of policy text.

Griffiths, Vidovich and Chapman (2009, p204) commented that:

“.. the use of discourses of local empowerment embedded in notions of ‘policy partnerships’ and ‘communities of practice’ becomes a tool of legitimation for the State, because of the purported wide local-level support for, and participation in, the policy process. However, despite the policy rhetoric, the State continues to exert significant control over the policy processes through both overt and covert mechanisms.”

Broadhead (2002) complained that discourse may become seriously imbalanced if the State's power outweighs the curriculum policy process. Thus, there has been the need to maximize opportunities for other actors' involvement in curriculum design. Within this state control, concepts of collaboration and consultation have become key elements of curriculum policy discourses. As an opposite of the traditional top-down bureaucratic approach of policy making, discourses focusing on collaboration refer to the participation of grassroots interest groups (i.e. teachers) and communities, and emphasise their needs.

Consultation discourse may refer to different meanings depending on perspectives and contexts. On a macro level, it can be a tool for legitimising public policy by emphasising broad local-level participation in the policy process. Numerous opportunities may be provided to grassroots interest groups in the policy making process. A highly consultative policy process enables the State to claim credit for the policy, in order to benefit to more groups. However, it is at the same time criticized as 'a shift of blame' for any potential negative outcomes, because the actual consultation activities may not be as straightforward as the theory behind them. (Ibid) A piece of research on the curriculum reform in Western Australia shows that, the consultation sessions can be strictly controlled by the State to avoid public expression of negativity. It is argued that the selection of individuals to participate in the consultation process reveals a strong link between the involvement in policy process and the existing power relations. There is a tendency for local leaders, who maintain good relationships with policy makers, to be consulted regularly. The consultation session was also criticised for the way policy feedbacks were treated by elites. The consulted public's lack of knowledge and expertise of policy was, to some extent, neglected in the policy process, as they may be asked to provide feedback on policy that the majority do not understand (Ibid).

The participation of grassroots interest groups in policy process does not change the nature of policy making as mainly it will lead to a reproduction of the values of the dominant groups. As mentioned earlier, the state controls the policy agenda, which, not surprisingly, may be different from the agenda of local policy users and receivers.

Therefore, the grassroots groups are invited to react to a decision which has already been made.

In the above, the political intervention has strong influence on curriculum policy, in relation to the participation of various actors in the policy process. On the surface, the practice of power may appear systematic. However, as many writers continue to remind us, policy making is not always scientific and rational (Ball, 1990; Broadhead, 2002).

“It is difficult to disentangle professional knowledge from personal values; they impact on the policy making process in a complex interface at every level of power, influence and activity.” (Broadhead, 2002, p60)

Personal values do not come from nowhere. They are formed by an individual's social and cultural experiences, which are influenced by historical, cultural and political characters in context. Therefore, personal values are socially constructed. An individual's personal values reveal his/her social cultural position - in other words, status and class position. They also contribute to the formulation of certain cultural and political contexts, recognising that individuals may be involved in policy processes. This constructive practice of personal values in political context can be seen throughout the curriculum process, from consultation to the final syllabus and within any documentation and materials produced relating to curriculum policy.

1.3.3 Curriculum policy in a global context

It can therefore be seen that policies should be studied in context. A policy changes in meaning in the arenas of politics, its representation changes, and its key interpreters change. When researchers focus analytically on one policy, it is necessary to bear in mind that other policies and texts are in circulation and the enactment of one may inhibit, contradict or influence the possibility of the enactment of others. More attention should be drawn to this issue, especially in an increasingly connected global world. Lingard, Bawolle and Taylor (2005, p3) stated that “the

educational policy field today is multi-layered, stretching from the local to the global”. Bourdieu (1993) defined the field of policy making as a concept in the sense of a social rather than a geographical space. Thus, it is necessary to recognize the global character in today’s education policy making and the relations between national policy fields and international fields.

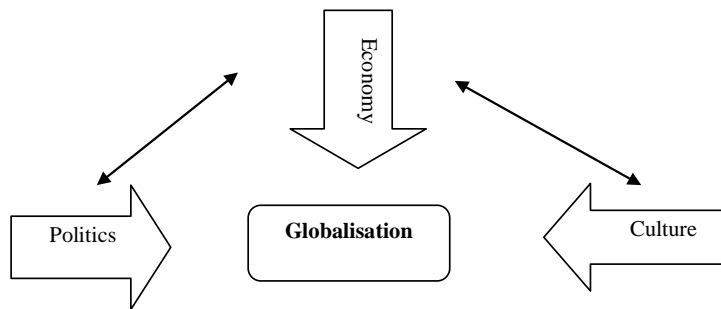
The creation of a global context

With the development of globalization, the situation of context in policy process has been enlarged and complicated (Hobsbawm, 1994). As Giddens (1994) noted, the results of globalization are in the transformation of international social contexts.

Local contexts are influenced by globalization through trans-national processes and communication, and the increasing awareness of this reality. Policies, to the extent that they have been built around the local context, may find the idea of globalization particularly challenging because it decentres the local scale as a unit, in terms of polity and economy.

As writers have said, globalization brings distant localities closer together and creates a framework in which individuals, groups and nations become increasingly independent (Giddens, 2003, 2006; Donn and Manthri, 2010). It goes beyond national boundaries and creates processes of supranational connections, operating on and through, different spheres of social life: economic, cultural and political (Giddens, 2003).

As Mackay (2004) noted, also discussed by Donn and Manthri, (2010) globalisation is about the growing worldwide interconnections between societies. It is implemented through increased cross-national communication and cooperation among individuals, integrated in different social contexts. Globalisation occurs in various aspects of social life, such as the economy, culture and politics. (Diagram 1.1)



In terms of economic globalisation, it has been argued that, cross-national economic activities can be considered as the origin of this global movement. To pursue the goal of economic growth, a series of worldwide changes occurred, such as new forms of economic organisation and a freer approach to trading. Meanwhile, the increase of cross-national economic co-operation required a new cultural and political environment.

Cultural globalisation involves the flow of symbols, images, language and other forms of cultural expressions across societies (Held, et, al, 1999; Donn and Manthri, 2010). Economic integration may be the most powerful aspect of globalisation; however, cultural interactions occur in all cross-national communicative and cooperative activities and work as the foundation of understanding. Meanwhile, it creates a sense of identity, which closely connects to the other factors of globalization, beyond national state boundaries.

There is always a tendency towards cultural standardisation and homogeneity in promoting smoother cross-national economic cooperation. However cultural globalisation is criticised for threatening diversity and difference. This cultural interaction, especially cultural homogeneity, is not a new phenomenon; it is in fact part of the history of human civilisation. We may view 'cultural standardisation and homogeneity' from two dimensions: as the dual flow of cultural products and cultural values. The flow of cultural products (such as language, arts, music and food) can be seen as an outcome of cross-national interaction, or globalisation, over the past few decades. There has always been a need for the creation of an agreed

understanding between business partners, economic institutes, political states and participants in cultural activities. However, this cultural transaction is an uneven process, which both reflects existing patterns of inequality and generates new orders in the world.

Since globalization affects all major fields such as the economy, politics and national culture, education and education policies, which connect to these fields are rapidly being changed and rearranged through the contrary pressures of integration and disintegration. The west, particularly the US, is the world-leader in various areas. Meanwhile, other countries are encouraged to follow a set of stages that promise the possibility of ‘catching up’ with the west. As Ozga and Lingard (2007) commented, many developing countries have to learn western rules, in order to survive in a western dominated world. The promotion of the English language is a typical example of this ‘survival kit’. Access to the English language means access to global networks. For example, the intention of ‘catching up’ with the west and ‘fitting into’ the world is very obvious in the national curriculum for English in China.

In the political field, the sovereignty of nation-states is undermined, while the autonomy of individuals is pursued. Globalization encourages the development of worldwide relations that reach beyond the individual nation. The existence of these increasingly integrated systems has had both a positive and negative impact upon nations. For example, many multi-layered systems of global governance have been established (i.e. UN, World Bank, WTO and international NGOs). Take the case of Pakistan as an example; Ali (2009) stated that targets promoted by international organizations were pursued as a part of the national collective. In a way, these international organizations are argued to be means for maintaining the hegemony of mainly Western countries in the postcolonial era. Although nation states still exert a political purpose, a new sense of belonging is created through the establishment of new global orders and rules, with the use of ‘development’ language, rhetoric and discourse among these cross-national organizations (Donn and Manthri, 2010).

Globalization therefore creates a set of widely agreed uses for language and rhetoric. They are promoted by the development of a global market, international organizations and cultural flows. In the educational field, Donn and Manthri (2010) note that this language and rhetoric is the central feature of policy and practice in the context of globalization. They are spread through research, media and policies. The use of this language and rhetoric represents globalization; meanwhile, it is a part of the process of globalization itself.

Donn and Manthri (2010, p22) state that:

“Those working in education in the region of the Gulf may find the spreading ideology connected to globalization of Higher Education quite different to indigenous social and cultural constructions.”

Global education may be considered as a set of unequal transactions. The rhetoric embedded in the knowledge economy, global labour market and international standards and agendas, to a great extent, are contributed to and led by the developed, mostly Western countries.

From an economic perspective, a global market has now developed with the modern technologies, which has made the transportation of materials and good faster and cheaper (Reich, 1992; Donn and Manthri, 2010).

As sellers in the global educational field, these countries are usually the parties who acquire the greater benefits. Yang (2003, p281) pointed out that

“...global education insensitively spreading its providers’ views of the world onto developing nations”.

Autonomy in the global context

Thus, the capacity of nation states to direct and control educational policy making is challenged by globalization. Although a policy may be produced domestically, the practice of power which contributes to the formulation of such a policy may be immersed in a network beyond national boundaries. For example, the economic critique in education reform is challenged by globalization. Apple (1996b, p8) demonstrated this by saying:

“A large portion of current reform initiatives are justified partly by wanting to enhance the connection between education and the wider project of meeting the needs of the economy.”

Lingard, Bawolle and Taylor (2005) also argued that national autonomy in the educational field has been reduced in a globalized context. They indicated that education policy analysis needs to take account of the fact that education policy is made elsewhere than in departments of education. It is not only where education policies are written, but also the pressure that education policy making receives outside of classrooms and schools that matters. As a multi-dimensioned process, globalization creates new orders in the power relationship both on national and international levels. For example, today, in this information age, the development of a ‘knowledge based economy’, has created a discourse informing policy and programmes in the education sector. There is not enough evidence to tell if these globalization-related education policies changed through a top-down or bottom-up approach. However, what is quite clear is that multi-dimensioned globalization creates new knowledge or technique requirements, for policy users and receivers.

We can see these changes in many aspects such as new global technologies, an unprecedented movement of students, the development and focus of an internationally-recognized standard program and evaluation system, the adjustment of curricula and their details, and the requirements of teaching staff.

The influence of globalization on curriculum is demonstrated in many aspects such as the changing of subject design and the context of subjects. Curriculum policies in some nations may be changed in preparation for competition in the international labour market and the global economic field, the reactions of cross national cultural transformation and the prevention of political and cultural ‘submerging’ or ‘infection’. For example, in Singapore, at the beginning of the 21st century, educational policy makers were “*being urged to foster creativity and innovation to enhance national economic competitiveness in the global economy*” (Tan and Gopinathan, 2000, p5). In China, after the launch of the Open Door policy in late 1970s, education was reoriented to meet the needs of the country’s modernisation, in the competitive global society.

1.4 Conclusion

A policy can be understood as both text and discourse. It is an outcome of a social constructive process; and it represents the culture of policy makers. In a way, the process to create educational policy, especially curriculum, is considered as a process of knowledge production. However, rather than being ‘produced’, it is a process for knowledge to be ‘reproduced’. It is the policy makers’ knowledge, or their culture, being reproduced in such a policy making process.

This research takes these views and relocates them in the context of the People’s Republic of China. To provide a policy background, the next two chapters will review the development of educational policy and the EFL curriculum in Chinese Basic Education. Chapter two discusses the major changes in educational policy and curriculum in China, and identifies the important roles of Moral Education and the dilemma between a mass education and an elite education. Chapter three examines the innovations of the EFL curriculum in the PRC and identifies the roles of key players over different periods.

Chapter Two: Education Policy and Curriculum in China

2.1 Introduction

An analysis of the theoretical background of educational policy and curriculum formed the narrative of the last chapter. It was noted that, a policy can not be studied out of context. To study an educational policy in China, it is important to have an understanding of its development from a historical perspective. Thus, this chapter also presents a concise overview of major educational policies during various periods in China.

Firstly, this chapter reviews the major changes in education policy and curriculum in contemporary China.

Secondly, this chapter discusses two issues: ‘Moral Education in the curriculum and its focus’ and ‘the balance between a mass education and elite education’ in the development of Chinese educational policy.

2.2 Education policy and curriculum in China

2.2.1 Education policy in China

Beginning of the modern educational system in China

The modernization of China's educational system started in 1901, when the rulers of the last feudal dynasty in China promoted a series of reforms in the social political field. With the launch of 'xing xue zhao shu' (Educational Descript), the Imperial examination system (Ke Ju exam), which had dominated Chinese Civil Service Selection over a thousand years, was abolished, followed by the establishment of a new Educational Ministry and a new nationwide educational system.

In 1905, a top-down educational administration system was set up when the first central Educational Ministry came into existence. Influenced by Japan, the first modern Chinese educational system consisted three sections: ten years of Primary Education, five years of Secondary Education and seven years of Higher Education.

Instead of the simple purpose of training an elite group, the curriculum based on the 1901 education reformation adopted an open mind towards western technology and broke the domination of Confucianism on the feudal society of China.

After the collapse of the Qing Dynasty, the educational system was changed in 1912 to a shorter process including seven years Primary Education, four years Secondary Education and 7 years Higher Education. To follow up this adjustment, new ideologies such as 'equality, liberty, democracy and fraternity' were promoted to replace the old moral principles³ which dominated the feudal society of China. According to the new policy, girls had equal rights as boys in getting access to education. In Primary Education, female students were allowed to study in mixed

³ The three cardinal guides (ruler guides subject, father guides son and husband guides wife) and the five constant virtues (benevolence; righteousness; propriety; wisdom and fidelity) as specified in the feudal ethical code.

schools. For Secondary Education onwards, schools for girls were founded especially for female education.

With the increasing influence of western-style liberal democracy, an American style 6-3-3 (six years primary, three years junior secondary and three years Senior Secondary Education) education system was adopted in China in 1922.

After 1927, a comprehensive educational legislation system was founded by the National Government. For the improvement of the quality of education and better delivery of government approved ideology, a new centralized educational administration system and nationally unitary curriculum was established. In 1927, party education was added in as one of the important goals of the national curriculum by the Kuo Min Tang (KMT). Jiang Jieshi, the president of the National Government of the day, proposed that the ideology of the Party should rule the nation. Party Education was emphasised in the curriculum established in July 1927. In May 1928, the party education was replaced by the ‘Three Principles of the People’⁴ in the national curriculum. The education on ‘Nationalism, Democracy and Socialism (which is understood as ‘social welfare’ within this philosophy) started to be taught in various levels of education as a compulsory subject. At the same time, military training was also required in primary and secondary schools. In 1928, the education ministry launched a series of regulations regarding the publication of textbooks. According to the regulations, textbooks had to contain updated information which emphasized the ‘Three Principle of the People’ and keep up with reality. Based on these regulations, strict textbook censorship was founded in the 1930s in China. Meanwhile, discipline was emphasised in schools alongside academic subjects. It was also required that the post of head teacher and disciplinarian directors in schools could only be filled by the members of the KMT.

⁴‘Three Principle of the People’ which includes the ‘Nationalism, Democracy and Socialism’ is a political philosophy developed by Sun Yat-sen as part of a philosophy to make China a free, prosperous, and powerful nation. Its legacy of implementation is most apparent in the governmental organization of the Republic of China (ROC), which currently administrates Taiwan.

Pre-1949

In the 1930s, Yang Zhejiang suggested that strict control of the education field was essential for the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC). In his view, education played a role as a tool of the class struggle. During the Second World War and China's Civil War period, cadre training was considered the most important part of education in Communist revolutionary bases. Social education and general education were demoted to second and third place.

According to the philosophy of the class struggle, which was considered as the foundation of policies launched by the Communist Party of China in the 1930s, people with working class backgrounds had priority in getting access to education. The value of equality in education promoted after the 'May 4th Movement' in 1919 was replaced by the class struggle philosophy. For example, children of landholders, millers (factory owners) and rich farmers were excluded from Secondary Education.

The promotion of governmentally approved philosophy was highly emphasised in the educational policies launched in the revolutionary bases of the Communist Party of China in 1930s and 1940s. Not only students, teacher candidates also experienced strict class background censorship. All private schools were shut down, while political development was emphasised in the professional development of teachers in public schools. Gao (2000) indicated that relevant policy on teachers' political training aimed at 'rebuilding' teachers, who were considered as a part of the intelligentsia, to be the 'combatants' of Chairman Mao in the educational field.

During the 'pre-1949' period, a 'New Democracy Education' system (NDES) was founded and developed in the revolutionary bases of the CPC. This system was based on the philosophy that 'education is an essential tool in the theory and practice of any social changes'. The political function of education was emphasised in the NDES, whilst lower class people were given priority in getting access to educational resources. The practicability of learning was determined by the policy makers. However, the normalization of general education and the systematization of

knowledge delivery were ignored. Learners were labelled according to their social classes. Consequently, people's individual interests, personalities and talents were considered as elements of the old education system whose ideology was against the mission of building a communist state (Yang, 2005). Some of the radical educational philosophies were continued in the subsequent development of education in the PRC.

1949-1957

Chinese society has undergone tumultuous changes in social economic, political and cultural areas after the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. Tsang (2000a) states that the history of the post 1949 China is dominated by the conflicts for power between two factions (radicals and moderates), in the CPC. In such a framework, the educational policies have also been characterized by major shifts and reversals. The radicals, led by Mao Zedong and others, saw education as a key tool in political and ideological development which aimed to achieve communism and human liberation in China. On the other hand, the moderates who were represented by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, believed that education had a key role in developing the human input to production and supporting national economic and technical development (Tsang, 2000a).

In his work, Schugurensky pointed out that, prior to 1949, China faced a low literacy rate of only 15% to 20%, as well as lacking educational facilities with a national curriculum.

In December 1949, the 1st National Educational Conference brought forward a guideline, which was strongly influenced by Soviet Russia, for education reform in the newly-founded PRC. The constitution of a new socialist educational system was set down as the ultimate goal of this guideline. Meanwhile, a Soviet Russian style educational system was tentatively imported in the early 1950s, although the entire transfer of Soviet Russian educational policy was constantly debated by policy makers in China (Yang, 2005). It contained the nationalized educational institutions at various levels, including primary schools, secondary schools (junior and senior),

vocational schools and universities. The reformation also included the centralization of the planning and financing of education. Meanwhile, an agenda was set in 1956 to achieve the universal education of 7-12 year olds after the development and revision of the primary curriculum from 1952 to 1955. Secondary Education was expanded in 1953-1957, while the quality improvement issue was focused upon in 1954-1955. After the reconstitution of institutions founded before 1949, policies were launched to centralize Higher Education regarding its admission, placement of graduates, management and finance.

1958-1965

In this period, the political context in China was summarized as an ‘intensified two line struggle’ between Mao Zedong and his supporters on one side and Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, and their supporters on the other side (Tsang, 2000a, p5).

Mao Zedong led a ‘Great Leap Forward’ national experiment which intended to accelerate the development towards communism between 1958 and 1960. Production teams, brigades and communes, as units of production, were established in rural areas. In 1961-65, the policies on economic development were adjusted under the leadership of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping till their replacement by Mao Zedong and the Gang of Four through the launching of the Cultural Revolution in 1966-1976.

In the Education Guideline launched in 1958 by the Central Committee of the CPC and the State Department, Mao Zedong emphasised the fundamentality of ensuring the leadership of the CPC in the educational field. It established the unsurpassable status of the CPC over Chinese education policy making in the long term. On the other hand, this guideline brought forward an innovative blueprint for the development of education in China, which emphasized that education must serve the proletariat class and must be combined with manual labour.

As a milestone in the development process of modern education in China, the 1958 guideline created a politically-loaded education system. It built the total authority of

the CPC, which was superior to the academic insiders' influence in the educational fields.

Meanwhile, it put emphasis upon political and ideological education, which is based on Marxism and Leninism. 'Key schools' for elite preparation were established through secondary and university education. Students with excellent academic performance could get access to key schools through exams (Tsang, 2000b). All of these themes had far-reaching influence in the development of education in China. Yang (2005) pointed out that required political directions always outmatched academic knowledge delivery in the educational field until late 1970s in the PRC. Meanwhile, the top-down preference on academic performance later led to the aspiration of learning outcomes among teachers, students and parents. He also indicated that the launch of the 'key school' policy potentially shaped the unbalanced examination-oriented education system in China after the 1980s.

In general, education underwent a rapid quantitative expansion during the Great Leap Forward in 1958-60 and a contraction during the Adjustment Period in 1961-65. Prior to 1961, some curricular experimentation was carried out in primary and Secondary Education. Meanwhile, extra manual labour and social activities were added to the curriculum in secondary and Higher Education. In the adjustment period, a dual system of regular schools and work-study (part-time) schools was introduced. At the same time, secondary vocational schools were established in urban China.

1966-1976

Between 1966 and 1976, China underwent the Cultural Revolution, when the leadership of the CPC was re-captured by Mao Zedong and the Gang of Four. During these ten years, mass campaigns in cultural institutions were carried out. Many Chinese traditions were challenged and countless items of cultural heritage were destroyed by the revolutionary youth groups (the Red Guard).

During the Cultural Revolution era, political and ideological targets of education were re-focused upon, while the approach based on the combining of theory and practice was emphasised. As a part of manual labour practices, educated youths were sent to rural China for re-education and learning from the 'real proletariat'.

The education system was changed to 5 years of Primary Education, 4 years of Secondary Education and 3 or 4 years of Higher Education (Yang, 2005). Examinations for entering a higher school were done away with in Primary and Secondary Education. Admissions into Higher Education were stopped until 1970. Later, the national examination for Higher Education entry was replaced by recommending the admission of students from peasant and working classes, to reform universities. The national examination was ended until 1977 (Tsang, 2000a).

Part-time secondary schools in rural areas were criticized for their 'poor quality', which was partly led by over-emphasis on production working in the Cultural Revolution period. Also, it was considered to be blocking proletariats from higher schools. Owing to these reasons, the elite educational policy and vocational education system were abolished between 1967 and 1976. However, Yang (2005) indicated that the quantity of Basic Education was dramatically improved during the Cultural Revolution period in China, through the establishment of regular schools in rural areas.

1977-1984

After the death of Mao Zedong and the capture of the Gang of Four in 1976, the Cultural Revolution eventually ended. Deng Xiaoping re-captured the Party leadership in 1978 and initiated the Reform and Opening Up policies. Economic development was emphasised with the carrying out of a series of reforms in the economic and legislation system.

Education development was emphasised by Deng's government, as a key means to develop the national economy. Consequently, another education reform was called

on with the focus on promoting educational quality at all levels. Experimentation with the decentralization of management and finance provision in education was scheduled. A series of Cultural Revolution Period policies were reversed, such as the resumption of the national examination for Higher Education entry; the re-development of key educational facilities at various levels and the re-establishment of vocational training facilities.

In 1980 Deng Xiaoping proposed the aim of education was ‘for the development of new generation of people with lofty ideals, moral integrity, good education and a strong sense of discipline’.

During a school visit in 1983, he proposed that education must face modernization, face the world, and face the future. Modernization was then focused upon as a target for China’s educational reform.

1985 – 1989

Since 1985, the education system in China has undergone a few reforms. In 1985, the CPC Central Committee launched the ‘Decision on the Reform of the Educational Structure’, setting the target that achieving the nine-year compulsory education (6 years of Primary Education and 3 years of Junior Secondary Education) and the eradication of youth and adult illiteracy should be achieved by 2000. This policy is considered as the actual start of educational reform in China’s redevelopment period.

This ‘Decision’ proposed a series of changes in the educational field:

- a) to delegate the power of educational management to localities from the central government; the local governments should be responsible for Basic Education
- b) to adjust the structure of Secondary Education and promote the development of vocational education
- c) reform in admission and graduate placement in Higher Education

- d) to increase the financial investment in education on both national and local levels, according to the number of enrolment in education; the increase of governmental funding on education has to be higher than the growth of governmental financial income. Meanwhile, local governments were allowed to charge additional fees for education, in order to increase the financial provision for Basic Education.

In 1986, the Basic Education policy established was on a firm legal basis, through the ‘Compulsory Education Law of the PRC’, issued by the National People’s Congress.

1990-2003

In this period, the development of national education was promoted, with a focus on the quality of educational provision on various levels. Education was considered an industry. Owing to the lack of adequate governmental funding, the ‘marketization of public education’ was promoted as a means to attract more private resources to be used in educational field. Public schools were encouraged to make profits through educational activities. For example, with the help of private financial capital, private schools were founded as affiliated institutions of public schools with a good reputation, or public schools were restructured to private institutions with approval. In the late 1990s, Higher Education started to expand their enrolment and the period of free Higher Education came to an end.

In early 1999, the State Council ratified the ‘Action Plan for Education Development’, formulated by the Ministry of Education (MoE), clarifying the promotion of a quality-oriented education at all levels. In June 1999, the ‘Decision on the Deepening of Education Reform and the Full Promotion of Quality of Education’, issued by the CPC Central Committee and the State Council, emphasised the direction for the establishment of a socialistic education with Chinese character in the 21st Century. According to the Action Plan, government funding was increasingly provided to less developed rural areas for the nine-year compulsory

education project. Provincial governments were given more power in Higher Education affairs. Reformatations on curriculum and pedagogy were carried out to encourage students' independent thinking and creativity.

2003- Now

In 2003, the economic growth in the educational field and expansion in quantity of educational provision was replaced by focusing on quality and quantity.

In 2005, the MoE launched 'Suggestions on the promotion of the balanced development of Basic Education' in order to keep the gap of educational provisions in various dimensions limited. These dimensions include gaps between urban and rural areas, different regions and different schools.

This policy advocated that students should enrol in school within their residential region, and it was prohibited to establish key schools.

In the same year, a further policy 'Notice on the preparation for the rectification of admissions of restructured public schools' was launched by the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) and the MoE, to put a total stop to the marketization of public educational provision. Since then, no more public schools were authorized to re-register as private institutions, and they could not found private affiliated institutions either.

In 2006, the Council State launched a 'Decision on the key issues to the construction of a socialist harmonious society', which emphasised the need to ensure the prior position of education in national development and to promote equality in education.

In the same year, the National People's Congress amended the 'Compulsory Education Law of the PRC', which was promulgated in 1986, laying down the new mechanism for rural compulsory education. The new Education Law promised every child in rural China nine years of compulsory education, free of all charges. It

clarified that the country-level governments should take the main responsibility for the rural compulsory education, while the provincial governments would be responsible for raising funds.

2.2.2 Curriculum development in China

Prior to the abolishment of the imperial examination system, the content of education was enshrined in the Confucian classics. Until the 1905 reformation, the modern education system was introduced in China. The utility influenced the curriculum in China from the 1911 revolution. For the economic improvement of society, some elements of Chinese classical learning were replaced by the emphasis on moral, utilitarian, military and aesthetic education (Chen, 1999). The curriculum consisted of the Chinese classics, history, geography, morals and the natural sciences.

After the founding of the PRC, Chen (1999, p17) indicated that:

‘...school curriculum planning was conducted on the Soviet encyclopaedic polytechnic knowledge basis, paying special attention to rationality.’

The CPC leaders adopted Soviet thinking and committed to the politicisation and utility of the curriculum. Subjects like ‘manual labour, military training, social activities and Moral Education (or politics)’ were added to the curriculum at various levels of education, in order to achieve moral values and to relate knowledge to the real world.

In modern China, the principle of universality occupied a central position in the curriculum. After 1949, under the central control of the CPC, equality in education, as addressed in the Soviet-influenced educational policies, was targeted by having a national curriculum. As Chen (1999, p18) pointed out, this curriculum aimed at preparing *‘all rounded youngsters who would be informed by communist ideology, high moral standards, spiritual enrichment and harmonious physical and mental development’* for the communist revolution. In this case, the curriculum, which in

practice may have great differences between urban and rural areas, was standardised by the State Educational Commission (SEC).

This curriculum was criticized as it ignored individual differences and limited the autonomy of local schools. Before the Reform and Opening up in China, a few experiments were launched with the provision of students with different backgrounds and needs.

In the 1960s, a selective dual system of regular and vocational training schools was introduced in China. In rural areas, part-time schools were founded to fulfil the production needs of students. In urban areas, regular schools, which included a small proportion of key schools, prepared youngsters for Higher Education, while vocational schools trained middle-level professional workers (Chen, 1999). This dual education system was abolished in the Cultural Revolution period, and re-established afterwards.

Since 1949, the national curriculum has undergone eight reformations as listed in the table below. (Table 2.1)

1st 1949- 1952	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1951 'National curriculum for Secondary Education (temp)' aims at establishing a system of national syllabus and textbook to be used throughout the entire country - Change in length of schooling to 5 years Primary Education and 6 years Secondary Education -Authorization to the People's Education Press as the only producer of national textbooks for all subjects -1951 Production of national textbooks (PEP)
2nd 1953- 1957	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -1954 Revision of teaching materials for Secondary Education (PEP) -Launch of first comprehensive national syllabus for all subjects
3rd 1957-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Promotion of Mao Zedong's target of education as students' development in morality, intelligence and physique; to cultivate eligible educated

1963	<p>socialist labour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of manual labour into subjects <p>1958, 'National syllabus for Secondary Education', emphasis on a combined schooling with knowledge delivery and labour training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Big leap in curriculum reform, known as the 'educational revolution' <p>Reduction of number of subjects, length of schooling (10 years Basic Education), decentralization of educational management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -1961 Production of new national textbooks (PEP) -1963 Production of new national textbooks (PEP)
4 th 1964- 1977	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mao Zedong called for a reform on education, including: length of schooling, curriculum, pedagogy - Reduction of subjects -1965 Revision of national textbooks (PEP) - Cultural Revolution (1967-1977), no national syllabus or textbooks; content of education focused on life, society and revolution.
5 th 1978- 1980	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1978 National syllabi for Basic Education - Re-establishment of the People's Education Press - 1978 Production of new national textbooks (PEP)
6 th 1981- 1984	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -1981/1982 National syllabi for primary schools, secondary schools and key secondary schools -1981/1982 Production of new national textbooks -1984, Teaching plans for <i>urban Primary Education and rural Primary Education</i>, different standards provided to urban and rural schooling for subjects including mathematics, foreign language, biology and labour
7 th 1985- 1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -1985 Reform of education structure -1986 National syllabi for all subject in Basic Education -1986 Compulsory Education Law of the PRC -1988 Teaching plan for primary and Junior Secondary Education (temp) -1990 Production of new national textbooks -1992 National syllabi for nine-year compulsory education/ senior secondary schools

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two systems in compulsory education 6 years of Primary Education and 3 years of Junior Secondary Education; or 5 years of Primary Education and 4 years of Junior Secondary Education - Decentralization of textbook design to some local area - 1992 syllabi for 24 subjects (temp), ‘one syllabi - many textbooks’
8 th 1996- now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of Quality-Education approach - 1996 National syllabi for regular senior secondary schools - 1996 Production of new national textbooks - 2000 National syllabi for all subject in Basic Education (trial) - Revision of national textbooks - 2001 Guideline for the curriculum reformation on Basic Education (trial) - 2003 Production of new national textbooks Until 2005, the implementation of new curriculum throughout the entire country - Establishment of the new educational ideal, change to a learner-centred curriculum - Emphasis on the practical base of educational objectives - Emphasises on Moral Education, scientific and technology education, comprehensive practice activities and the development of individuals’ humanistic quality - Innovation in curriculum materials - Improvement in curriculum management

1992 national curriculum reform

For the economic development of China, the importance of education was highly valued. However, the Chinese national education system was criticized for its centralized management, unitary curriculum and knowledge-based subjects. In recognition of these issues, the Central Committee of the Party and the State Council in China, launched a ‘Decision on the Reform of the Educational Structure’ in 1985 and called for an educational reform.

In terms of Basic Education, this reform introduced the nine-year compulsory education in China, and set out the target of education as the socialist modernisation of China. The Ministry of Education was replaced by the SEC to take charge of the educational development in China.⁵

In 1988, the SEC launched a national teaching plan for compulsory education. This curriculum did not change the target of the curriculum; which remained ‘to cultivate a new generation of people with lofty ideals, moral integrity, a good education, and a strong sense of discipline’. Based on this curriculum, some local adjustments started were allowed. Meanwhile, it also allowed the publication of alternative sets of textbooks for each subject by any educational institutions with the approval of the Textbook Screening Committee.

In 1992, the SEC further announced another new draft curriculum for nine-year compulsory education, as a development of the 1988 curriculum. The revision concluded the course provision, time allocation, assessment and the requirements of implementation (Chen, 1999). It broke the traditional centralized educational administration system with the establishment of the ‘one standard with multiple textbooks’ strategy, which has had a far reaching influence on educational development in China.

A state approval system was developed to replace the previous ‘state-oriented’ textbook publication system. Until the 1992 curriculum reform, the People’s Education Press, a state-owned publisher, was the only institution authorized to publish national textbooks for use in Basic Education. In the past, only one volume of nationwide textbooks was provided within a certain period. In the new system, the power to produce and distribute national textbooks is delegated to local institutions. Any institute can participate in textbook production with the approval of MoE on the proposal of design and its production. Meanwhile, local authorities are given the autonomy to choose textbooks based on a textbook list provided annually by the MoE. The MoE retains its power in the establishment of textbook design agenda and

⁵ The SEC was replaced by the Ministry of Education in 1989, due to the re-establishment of the latter one.

textbook censorship, which evaluates the accuracy of subject knowledge and ideological correctness of school materials. However, the traditional state-based textbook production model was broken off.

It allowed local curriculum decision making for 10% of the total curriculum time, in order to reflect local interests. Meanwhile, it initiated activities and optional courses into curriculum planning.

Chen (1999) pointed out that the main purpose of the 1992 curriculum was to make the national curriculum for nine-years of compulsory education, more balanced and relevant. He also indicated that, in the 1992 curriculum design, policy makers paid particular attention to updating knowledge in order to keep pace with the world and reduce the overloading of academic work.

However, this curriculum was criticized as being knowledge-centred, examination-driven, urban-orientated and for lacking qualified teaching professionalism (Chen, 1999).

Firstly, it is argued that too much consideration was given to in the introduction of advanced scientific knowledge from developed countries in order to meet the criteria of economic growth in China. However, social demands and learners' individual differences were not taken in to account in this curriculum.

Secondly, this curriculum was highly affected by exam pressure, especially from the examination for the Higher Education entry. Schools are encouraged to offer optional courses, however, as Chen (1999, p26) commented, “...*not many schools are willing to spend time on 'non-examination subjects'*”.

Thirdly, this curriculum emphasised the rise in standards, while, to some extent, fundamental knowledge and skills may be neglected. Such a tendency was relatively obvious in rural areas. Content of school subjects and textbook knowledge were criticized as ‘difficult and complicated’; at the same time, students from rural schools

found that their school curriculum had no relevance to their life experiences (Wang, 2005).

Fourthly, there were concerns that the shortage of qualified teachers would embarrass the implementation of the inflexible 1992 curriculum. Statistics shows that 73.9% of primary school teachers were qualified, while only 46.5 % of secondary school teachers were qualified. With the curriculum reform, this ratio had increased rapidly, from 88.9% and 69.1% in 1995 to 96.9% and 87.0% in 2000. However, until 2002, there were still 2.61% of primary school teachers and 9.72% of secondary school teachers unqualified (PEP, 1990, 2002).

2001 national curriculum reform

In 1999, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CCCPC) and the State Council issued a ‘Decision on Deepening Education Reform and Advancing Essential Qualities-Oriented Education in an All-Round Way’ and started a ‘learner-centred’ curriculum reform in China (CCCPC, 1999; Zhu, 2007).

In 2001, the Ministry of Education (formerly State Education Commission, 1985-1998) issued the ‘Guidelines on Curriculum Reform of Basic Education’, along with 38 syllabi and a document for the evaluation system.

This 2001 Guidelines on curriculum clarified the central position of students’ development in education and constructed a system of educational objectives as: “the renaissance of the Chinese nation and the comprehensive development of individuals”. Translated by Zhu (2007, p224), the 2001 Guidelines on curriculum (MoE, 2001) stated:

“The curriculum for compulsory education must be conducive to the universalizing of nine-year compulsory education, be attainable for the overwhelming majority of the students, embody the basic requirements for citizenship, and be focused on fostering the students’ motivation and ability to undertake lifelong learning. Under the

prerequisite that all students should achieve the basic requirements, the curriculum for regular senior middle school has been arranged in several optional levels to give students more choices and development opportunities, and to lay a solid foundation for them to cultivate competencies in life skills, hands-on practice and creativity.”

Liu quoted by Wang (2005, p2) indicated that:

‘the core of the curriculum reform is to enable, through education, new, advanced cultures and concepts to spread in schools and society at large, to build among the Chinese people a cooperative and constructive partnership of democracy, equality, dialogue, consultation and mutual understanding’.

To achieve this purpose, competence-orientated education is stressed through this curriculum reform. It calls for an end to overemphasis on book knowledge, which may be thought to be too difficult or simply out of date (Chen, 1999). It emphasises the importance of bridging schools and society. A dual curriculum with subject studies and practical activities is intended to be established in order to change the learning mode so as to develop pupils’ individualities. The reform includes changes in the following areas:

- a) educational content,
- b) curriculum organization,
- c) curriculum materials,
- d) mode of pedagogy
- e) curriculum evaluation system.

The concept of ‘experience’ in learning was highly valued in the 2001 curriculum reformation. As mentioned earlier, the previous curriculum was criticized for its over-difficult and obsolete content. The 2001 curriculum reformation developed a new system of educational content, with the focus on linking school knowledge to society, science, technology and most importantly, students’ lives. In contrast to the previous curriculum, it emphasised the basic requirements for students’ knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes through the process of learning. These emphases are

placed in “*Moral Education, scientific and technological education, art education, environmental education and comprehensive practical activities*” (Huang, 2004, p105).

The 2001 curriculum reformation built a new model of curriculum organization with a combination of subjective courses and integrative courses. The former ones reflect the external shape of curriculum (i.e. mathematics and language), while the latter ones reflect the ‘matter’ to knowledge, theorems and themes in curriculum (i.e. social studies and integrated sciences). The 2001 curriculum reformation claims that integrative courses should be placed in a central position in Primary Education, while more emphases need to be given to the subjective courses in secondary schools.

The 2001 curriculum reformation emphasised students’ role in schooling as active learners. In terms of pedagogy, there is a tendency to establish a more active mode in this curriculum. It called for a relatively democratic, equal and co-operative relationship between teachers and students.

A comprehensive system of curriculum evaluation is scheduled, including a system for assessing learners and learning, a system for assessing teachers and teaching and a system for curriculum products.

2.3 Characters of Chinese education

2.3.1 The role of Moral Education and its focus

In China, ‘Moral Education’ is not a new term. Historically speaking, education in China has been strongly influenced by Confucian philosophy, which emphasizes the importance of education for moral development of the individual, so that the State can be governed by moral virtue, rather than by the use of coercive laws. In the People’s Republic of China, Moral Education has always been provided as an individual subject (i.e. Thoughts and Politics) in Basic Education. Meanwhile, all subjects take responsibility for Moral Education. However, the focus of Moral Education in China has shifted over time.

Politically-loaded education

Between the early 1950s and the end of Cultural Revolution period, intellectuals (i.e. school teachers and scholars) were considered as ‘people who can be used or rebuilt’ for the development of socialist China. To some extent, the intellectual groups were politically ‘guarded’ by policy makers. In the education field, the political consciousness of teachers and students was emphasised, instead of consideration of their academic performance or achievements. For example, the 1958 guideline indicated that students’ performance of political practice should be considered as a principle condition in the marking process.

Later, the radical development of this guideline gradually turned it into a ‘class line’ and eventually a ‘blood pedigree theory of class’ in education. In fact, it may be considered as a ‘discrimination policy’ against non-proletariat students. Students from workers, farmers and revolutionary cadre’s families would enjoy priorities in education. The 1962 Higher Education Admission Regulations promoted a political censorship on students, which covered the check-up on student’s background on family members and connections. It regulated that students with anticommunist thoughts and behaviour would not be offered opportunities in Higher Education. Meanwhile, political loyalty would be preferred among students with similar academic performances. In 1965, the Admission Regulations were changed so that ‘students from working class or low-income farmer families and leaders of student unions enjoyed priority when entering Higher Education’. Under this regulation, the percentage of first year students from a lower class background in the universities, rapidly increased from 27.9% in 1953 to 71.2% in 1965 (MoE, 1949-1982).

In the 1970s, the national examination for Higher Education entry was replaced by a recommendation system. Owing to the emphasis on political performance, it was extremely hard for candidates outside favoured families, as mentioned earlier, to be offered positions in universities. According to the statistic, 99.8% of freshers in 1971 were children of industrial workers, low income farmers, revolutionary cadres and other working class families. To some extent, this ‘blood pedigree theory’ in

education was deeply rooted in the ancestor veneration in Chinese tradition, although the order of social classes was artificially rearranged. After the Cultural Revolution, this ‘discrimination’ policy was rapidly replaced by the re-emphasis on academic performance in admissions (Yang, 2005). However, the politics retained its influence in curriculum through subjects and activities.

An important target of education in China was to educate students as eligible future communists. Besides political education, students’ participation in production activities was considered as the key means of communist training. The 1958 guideline regulated ‘manual labour’ as a compulsory subject in the curriculum for basic education. Students were also encouraged to engage in paid part time work in their spare time. From 1961, university students were especially encouraged to participate in industrial and agricultural production activities, as well as their academic studies. Soon after this, class revolution was also planned as a compulsory subject in the curriculum of Higher Education. Meanwhile, military training and an intensive twenty week-long production activity, among university students, began. In 1964, graduates of Higher Education were required to join a one year labour practice programme before starting their own careers.

As the branches of the CPC, the development and administration of Young Pioneers of China (YPC) and the Chinese Communist Youth League (CCYL), in primary and secondary schools, was also emphasised by the policy makers. The YPC consists of children between the ages of six and fourteen; upon reaching the age of fourteen, members automatically exit the YPC and may go on to join the CCYL. According to the YPC constitution, each school organizes a ‘large detachment’ which is divided into ‘medium detachments’, each corresponding to a class. Each ‘medium detachment’ is then further divided into ‘small detachments’ with a handful of members. Generally, each small detachment has a leader; each medium detachment is led by a committee of a leader and between three and seven members; each large detachment is led by a committee of a leader and between seven and fifteen members. Adult leaders are chosen from either the CCYL or from local teaching staff.

The CCYL consists of youths between the ages of fourteen and twenty-eight. Youths between these ages may join the CPC, or upon reaching the age of twenty-eight, members automatically exit the CCYL. The league is organized in a party pattern. Students may join the league during their Secondary Education. In many cases, the detachments of either the YPC or the CCYL, acted as units to carry on political studies and activities. Compared with the policies between 1949 and 1979, political influence in education decreased to a great degree after the Reform and Opening up of China. The YPC and CCYL still play important roles in the administration and the curriculum of education. Beyond the political function; they also play active roles in factors such as Moral Education and social activities in schools and Higher Education institutions.

Depoliticised Moral Education in national curriculum

As mentioned earlier, the task of Moral Education in China was mainly focused on providing an ideo-political education that advocated Marxist-Leninism between 1949 and 1978. Today, China remains as one of the very few communist states in the world. However, since the Reform and Opening up in 1978, there have been substantial and vibrant internal ideological shifts under the brand name of Communism in China. Franklin (1989) and Lee and Ho (2005, p415) noted a series of ideological shifts, which are listed in the table as below: (Table 2. 2)

1978-1988	Rehabilitation of the intellectuals
1988-1989	Further extension of market mechanisms to further student demonstrations
1989-1991	Consolidation from the aftermath of the Tiananmen square event
1992-1995	Further economic liberalisation
1996-1999	Revival of nationalism in association with the handover of Hong Kong and Macau

2000- now	Recognition of entrepreneurs and further opening up to the world
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As the implications of ideology have shifted, the Moral Education in China also has been through a few changes. Since 1978, Moral Education has become gradually independent from politics in China. In 1988, a radical revision of the politically-orientated Moral Education curriculum, took place. Politics was emphasised in Moral Education in schools, but it began to be provided as a separate subject, focusing on students' behaviour. Later, in 1991, in the 'Outline of Moral Education in secondary school' issued by the State Council, 'Moral Education' began to emerge as a single focus in the citizenship curriculum, without being prefixed by 'ideology'.

The 1991 Outline clarified the target of Moral Education in China as: (a) to promote socialism and collectivism based upon patriotism, as well as; (b) to develop self-esteem, self-reliance and self-strengthening in students.

Owing to the emergence of capitalist liberalisation and peaceful revolution in the early 1990s, the State Council issued two documents (*Opinions on strengthening and improving the Party and ideological works in higher institutes in new circumstances*, and *Opinions on further strengthening and improving Moral Education work in schools*) to maintain the socialist ideology and to support the modernisation of China. A combination of Marxism theory lessons and ideopolitical education lessons were added to maintain the significance of the socialist status in Moral Education. In 1993 and 1995, the SEC issued two guidelines for Moral Education in primary and secondary schools, in which, the concepts of 'patriotism, collectivism and socialism' were given central place. They stated that, to be socialist citizens with lofty ideals, moral integrity, good education and a strong sense of discipline, students need to learn to:

- love the nation
- love the communist party
- love the people

- love the group
- love labour
- love to study and love science
- build good will and personality
- behave civilly polite
- obey social regulations
- understand democracy and legislation.

The slogan ‘five love’ (love the nation, people, labour, science and socialism) was promoted. To some extent, the concept of ‘patriotism’ carries more meaning than ‘love the nation’; it was often interpreted as ‘love the socialist country’ instead.

Since the late 1990s, policy makers noted the increasing need to teach young citizens to develop capacities for making independent moral judgements in the rapidly developing China and globalized world. The focuses of Moral Education remained in ‘patriotism, collectivism and socialist ideal’, although they might be interpreted differently with the modernization of China. The 2001 curriculum reformation reinforced the development of these concepts in Moral Education, to assist students in the development of correct worldviews, outlooks on life and values. In this case, over the last ten years, Moral Education emphasised the development of democratisation, individual well-being and globalisation. Within this framework, nationalistic education and the development of individual well being and the moral quality of citizens, were focused upon in subject studies and activities, as a part of the quality-centred curriculum.

2.3.2 The balance between ‘mass education’ and ‘elite education’

In contemporary China, two opposite but interacting principles were followed in the educational policy making process, for the promotion of the quality and quantity of education. To improve the ‘mass education’ in China, Basic Education, which includes both knowledge-based education and vocational training, was exclusively

developed in the rural areas. On the other hand, 'elite education' was promoted through the establishment of key schools and emphasis upon Higher Education. Educational policy provision has fluctuated between these two principles over periods. It is argued that, in general, 'elite education' philosophy dominated the education system in China. Higher education and education in cities was emphasised at various levels of schooling (Yang, 2006).

1949-1965

In this period, the Chinese government struggled to keep a balance between the principles of 'mass education and elite education' in policy making. Attempts were made to bring education to the masses, particularly to students in the rural areas. In 1958, Basic Education was promoted by the central government of China aimed at eradicating illiteracy and increasing the reach of nursery, primary and secondary schoolings. Until 1960, the amount and size of various levels of educational institutions, grew rapidly. In the early 1960s, this policy was adjusted by a series of guidelines on the curtailment of school size and staff numbers in order to improve the efficiency of education.

On the other hand, educational policies were designed to prepare the elites through secondary and higher education. In 1958, based on Mao Zedong's indication, the Educational Ministry launched the 'key schools' policy for students with excellent academic performance. According to the results of examinations, students were divided into 'key schools' and 'ordinary schools' in the higher level. In 1958, 194 secondary schools which took 4.4% in the whole nationwide Secondary Education institutions were established as 'key schools', in order to fulfil the needs of Higher Education and educate eligible candidates for universities. In the early 1960s, this 'key school' policy was extended to Primary Education. In other words, Primary Education, students were involved in a prospective university student selection system, which lasted 12 years from primary one to the final year of high school. Until 1963, 487 schools which took 3.1% of all public schools were authorized as 'key schools' (Yang, 2005). According to the statistics, over 90% of these key

schools were in cities and towns. In some provinces, there were no key schools in rural areas (MoE, 1949-1982).

Between 1961 and 1965, a dual system of education consisting of regular schools and work-study schools was adopted, aiming to produce academic elites and educate the masses. Regular schools had higher academic standards, while work-study schools were established mainly in rural areas for children from peasant backgrounds.

1966-1976

In the Cultural Revolution period (1966-1976), educational policy making emphasised the provision of mass education. Previously established work-study schools in rural areas were criticized for their ‘poor quality’ and were considered to be blocking the proletariat from higher schools.

Meanwhile, the ‘key schools’ policy was abolished, because it was considered to be the symbol of elitism and aristocratism, while the later one was criticized because of the exclusion of working class children from higher schools. Thus, the vocational education system and the elite education policy were both abolished, while more regular schools were established in rural areas. In terms of Higher Education, many universities were closed. The admission of undergraduate students in universities had been stopped for 6 years. For the postgraduate programmes, the stoppage lasted for 12 years. The Cultural Revolution disrupted the development of China in various means; however, it is argued that the quality of Basic Education was improved, especially in the rural areas (Yang, 2005).

Post 1978 – now

Soon after the Cultural Revolution, the focus of education in China was readjusted to urban areas, key schools and Higher Education. Vocational Secondary Education started to be re-promoted, while the amount of ordinary high schools was reduced. This adjustment and reduction lasted until the mid 1980s.

A significant theme after the 1980s is the prevalence of examination-oriented education system in China. The re-focus on Higher Education and re-promotion of the key school policy, continued to enlarge the education quality gap between schools. Meanwhile the ubiquitous emphasis on qualifications and learning outcomes among parents internally stimulated competitive education. It was rooted in imperial examinations, which were the only means for common people to move up to the governor class. It was also partly led by the launch of the One Child Policy which radically changed family structure in China. Owing to the less developed social welfare, the wellbeing of elders was mainly provided by the informal sectors, such as family, friends and neighbours.

In this case, as the single heir for the family in the next generation, the only child took the most responsibility for his/her parents' well-being in the future. For these concerns, the only child's education, which closely connected to his/her future achievement, was a big concern for parents. The combination of these historical and practical reasons and the key school policy made the education opportunities increasingly competitive in China.

In such a competitive environment, school choice has become a prominent issue in urban China since the early 1990s (Kwong, 1997). According to the government's general policy, students should attend school in their district of residence, but students may be able to enter other schools by paying extra tuition. Parental choice in schools can take one of several forms. For example, students with lower exam scores are allowed to pay a fee to attend a school with a higher entry threshold.

Also, students are allowed to attend a school in another district by paying a fee. Students were given more freedom in their school choice, and were also given opportunities to get access to better quality education. However, this autonomy of selection of schools, closely related to students' socioeconomic background. At the same time, the selected key schools were normally given priority in the assignment of teachers, funds, facilities and student recruitment. Therefore, the 'key school'

policy aggravated the educational imbalance between rural and urban China, and the gap between key or popular schools and lower quality schools.

On the other hand, the tendency of ‘decentralization and marketization’ in education has also intensified of the gap on educational provision between developed and less developed regions, or the urban and rural areas. In 1985, the provision of governmental funding on Basic Education was increased, at both central and local levels. To encourage the local financial investment on Basic Education, local governments were allowed to collect fees for education.

In 1990s, the theory of education as an ‘industry’ became prevalent in China. The marketization of public education was promoted, in order to attract private resources. Private schools and restructured public schools were established. Meanwhile, in the late 1990s with the enrolment expansion in Higher Education, universities started to charge for tuition.

Because educational resources were limited, the selected key schools were given priority in the assignment of teachers, funds, facilities, and student recruitment. In addition, schools in the economically-developed areas may be able to attract more funding from both governmental and non-governmental investment. These policies aggravated the educational imbalance between rural and urban China, as well as creating the gap between schools in the same region.

From 2005, more educational policy provision has been distributed to the rural areas to keep the gap limited. The central government called for a stop to the ‘reconstruction of public schools’ and requested that students remain in their residential areas for schooling. In 1996, the government increased the financial investment on Basic Education in rural areas to ensure free nine-year compulsory education for all children in those areas.

2.4 Conclusion

It is indicated that, changes in education policy, especially curriculum, reflects the social political climate. Reforms have been initiated to resolve the remaining problems on the equality of educational opportunities. However, China has a long way to go to eliminate the gap between rural and urban areas in education provision and ultimately achieve the set targets of the comprehensive development of individuals.

In China, traditionally, the policy making follows a top-down approach. With the modernisation, a trend of decentralization in both rights and responsibilities is revealed in terms of education provision, structural adjustment and curriculum development. Overall, the orientation of an educational policy is influenced strongly by the State; however, more players were allowed to be involved in the policy making process. An investigation of the EFL curriculum will provide a clearer picture of this issue.

The next chapter will focus on the development of the EFL curriculum in Basic Education. It will review how it was influenced by the educational reforms in China, explore the impact of the social and political changes on English language teaching and learning in a global context, and discuss the changing roles of different players in curriculum making.

Chapter Three: the EFL Curriculum in China

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed the development of education policy and the national curriculum of the PRC from a historical perspective. Since 1949, education in China has slowly evolved from a centralized and state-controlled structure into a more complex and pluralistic framework. Influenced by the changes in education policy, the development of the EFL curriculum in China experienced a similar decentralization process. However, owing to the nature of English language learning and its close connection with culture, the reform of the EFL curriculum in the PRC also substantially reflects changes in the political and social climate of China. In fact, these political and social changes have been seen as part of globalization which was addressed in Chapter One. Globalization was noted to be a key defining force in curriculum design. This chapter will address the factors influencing EFL curriculum production.

To provide a background understanding of the characters of EFL subject, this chapter begins with a brief discussion of the relationship between language and culture; and approaches in EFL teaching and learning. Most importantly, it examines the innovations of the EFL curriculum and textbooks in the PRC during various stages.

3.2 Language and culture

Traditionally, culture is considered as a source of shared norms and values exclusively shared by a large group of people. As Corbett (2003, p20) stated,

“the ‘culture’ of a group can be considered to be the relationship between its core beliefs and values, and the patterns of behaviour, art and communication that the group produces, bearing in mind that these beliefs and values are constantly being negotiated within the group.”

Stenhouse (1971) described the function of culture as a medium which helps to successfully complete interpersonal interaction. He pointed out that culture is realized in individuals but maintained by a group, independently of the existence of any one group. In his theory of cultural capital, Bourdieu (1993) asserted that culture is potentially subject to monopolization by individuals and groups, and that it plays an essential role in communication between members of groups.

According to Bourdieu, individuals belong to a certain group as soon as they are born. However cultural capital, which is considered a competence of group members, is not inborn. This competency is acquired through processes of learning and training, in circumstances such as family, school and the workplace. Various cultures of different groups may exist in one society, identified by features such as class and profession. Classes cannot be distinguished only according to economic capital. Apple (1996a) indicates that the use of cultural capital, in the form of appropriation of symbols and concepts, is also an important indicator of class.

The acquisition of culture occurs during contact between individuals and any action between individuals and existing cultural products. In addition, the spread of culture is a double direction interaction among individuals. During the process of sharing cultural experiences, individuals unconsciously learn culture from others.

Culture is regarded as shared social understandings that are reflected in values, beliefs and habitual social norms within a group of individuals (Scollon and Scollon,

1995). Value is defined by common statements about what is acceptable and unacceptable, right and wrong, and important and unimportant (Smith and Bond, 1998). Unlike personal values, cultural values are largely shared by members of groups and societies and are closely related to the norms of a culture. As Bourdieu notes, members are encouraged to adopt cultural values, even if their personal values do not entirely agree with the normative. Social groups differ in terms of their shared values in various cultural dimensions. In terms of eastern and western societies, there are significant differences between their values of kinship system and social organization. For example, traditional kinship relationships, which are strong in Asia, are far from being thought of as a significant tie among Westerners (Scollon and Scollon, 1995).

Culture may be passed on through use of its symbols. As part of a culture's symbol system, language acts as a tool through which individuals can reflect, express and pass on culture. Nida (1998, p29) explained that,

“Everything we say in language has meanings that are not in the same sense because it is associated with culture and culture is more extensive than language”.

Brown (1994) pointed out that language and culture are interwoven and inseparable. Successful communication is not possible in the absence of one or the other. Thus, learning a new language, or a new way to use a certain language, opens a door for people to learn about a culture other than their own.

3.3 Teaching English as other language

English has become the lingua franca throughout the modern world, which as Weber states, is associated with the rise of capitalism and industrialization (Rappa and Wee, 2006). Initially, the English language was adopted by many countries during the expansion of the British Empire. Aside from America, Australia and colonies in Asia and Africa, the influence of the English language extended to most other parts of the world through business and education after the Second World War. In the past 50

years, in terms of native-speaker ranking, English has moved from fourth to second place, after Chinese, Spanish and Arabic. Taking into account second language use, English is estimated as the second most popular language after Chinese (Graddol, 2007).

English as a foreign or second language continues to have a large foothold as far as use in the global economic and educational fields are concerned. Although Western economics have led the world since the industrial revolution, Wilson and Purushothaman (2003) predict that this economic dominance is coming to an end. With the redistribution of the global economy, the gap between national economies is narrowing. Many years ago, McCrum et al (1992) stated that English was the first truly global language. Today, even though the need to acquire Chinese and Spanish as a foreign language has been emphasized in some regions, English retains its hold as the most popular shared language in global economic and technological fields. On account of the development of knowledge economy, English language competence therefore contributes towards maintaining international competitiveness for national economies.

In Chapter One it was noted, that the advent of globalization, which intensifies cross-national relations, has had a major impact on economy and society (Giddens, 2003). The knowledge based economy, resulting from these intensifies, also led to a rapid change in education systems around the world. In fact, as Donn and Manthri (2010) noted, countries urgently need more educated and adaptable workforces. In other words, individuals are required to acclimatize to modern economic needs by acquiring higher-order and more flexible skills, such as competence in foreign languages.

As the existing lingua franca, English may be the most popular means for international communication. For the continuous acquisition of new knowledge and specialist skills in the future, English language competence is desirable for both national and individual development. Therefore, the need to adopt the English language is stronger in various countries and regions.

There is a great deal of debate about the most effective approach to English teaching. Generally speaking, ways of teaching English can be divided into two models depending on the location of language learning: the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL) and the teaching of English as a second language (ESL) (Zhang, 2007; Graddol, 2007).

3.3.1 Teaching English as a foreign language

The approach of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL), which was created in the 19th century, was orthodox in English teaching in the second half of the 20th century. In this model the learners, who are constructed as outsiders of the target language, normally learn English in their own country or places with no wide English-speaking environment. The purpose of EFL is stated as to ‘communicate with native speakers’ and ‘satisfy the requirements in labour markets or Higher Education institutions’.

In the EFL model, English is traditionally taught as part of the secondary school curriculum, with learners normally starting foreign language learning at the age of 10 to 13.

EFL focuses on linguistic knowledge, such as grammatical accuracy, and emphasizes the importance of emulating native speaker language behaviour (Graddol, 2007). English is normally taught in classrooms as a timetabled subject and learning materials include textbooks published by local government and international publishers. Learners are evaluated by local or international examinations such as IELTS⁶ and TOEFL⁷.

⁶ International English Language Testing System

⁷ Test of English as a Foreign Language

3.3.2 Teaching English as a second language

Initially, teaching English as a second language accompanied the expansion of the British Empire in the 19th century. English language teaching was one means used to rule the British colonies effectively.

However, this language teaching was not offered to every class. English competence was developed in a multilingual approach within select elite groups. Meanwhile, these groups were offered western-orientated culture and values.

In those colonial societies, children would informally learn some English before school age. Formal school education would develop their English language ability in a more standard variety. Local textbooks of a traditional academic kind were used, while learners would be evaluated by local examinations.

Later, ESL was delivered according to the needs of immigrants, allowing them to fit into the host community and acquire new national identities. In this context, English language is adopted by learners in a bilingual approach. Alongside linguistic knowledge of the mother tongue and English, cultural awareness of both the ethnic community and host society are required of ESL learners. Firstly, an understanding of the rights and obligations of permanent residents in English-speaking countries is essential for them to pass a citizenship or visa exam. Secondly, to function in host societies, some ESL learners have to act as translators and interpreters for less skilled family members.

Currently, a radical model of teaching English as a lingua franca (ELF) is playing an increasingly important role. It is a controversial branch of ESL. The target of ELF is fluent bilingual speakers who retain a national identity and who also have the special skills required to communicate with other non-native speakers. Rather than native-like accuracy, intelligibility is emphasized within ELF. It focuses on the requirements for intercultural communication skills which include awareness of both home culture and the other culture.

In some former colonies, compared to ESL, the regional adoption of English as a lingua franca is more voluntary due to political or economic concerns (Morrison and Lui, 2000; Crystal, 2003). For example, Hong Kong used to be a British colony but after the return of Hong Kong to China in 1997, although Chinese (both Cantonese and Mandarin)⁸ was stated as one of the official languages, English remained very popular. With the development of Hong Kong as an international financial centre, English has become the dominant medium for trade (Fishman, Cooper and Conrad, 1977). Currently, the ability to speak and write English may not be ‘a passport to successes’ as Boyle (1997) stated, but it helps. It is seen as ‘linguistic capital’, which is a notion related to Bourdieu’s view of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1997; Morrison and Lui, 2000). English allows entry to Higher Education and lucrative careers, opening doors to cultural and economic capital for citizens in Hong Kong (Boyle, 1997).

3.3.3 Intercultural communicative approach to English language teaching

In the original communicative approach to English language teaching, adopted in the mid 1980s, language is stated as a means of bridging an ‘information gap’ between individuals. By bridging this gap, learners’ linguistic knowledge and skills can be built up naturally and ultimately, the learners will reach the target of native-speaker competence. This approach was disputed by experts (Byram, 1997; Guilherme, 2002; Corbett, 2003) as it underestimated the importance of culture in language education.

Culture is taught in a communicative curriculum for different reasons. Based on the belief that culture and language are inseparable, culture may be used as a key means in curricula of motivating language use. Various topics regarding cultural products

⁸ Cantonese and Mandarin are two spoken varieties of Chinese. Cantonese is widely used as the spoken language in Hong Kong and Guangdong Province in the People’s Republic of China (PRC). Mandarin is used in the rest of the PRC. After the handover in 1997, the government of Hong Kong adopted a “bi-literate and trilingual” policy, which states Chinese and English as official languages and allows the use of both Cantonese and Mandarin as official spoken languages.

such as literature, values and behaviours are primarily introduced to help learners. For immigrant learners especially, who need to acclimatize themselves to the new culture, the behaviour of people from the host community is emphasized in their language learning as a process of ‘acculturation’. This psychological term is now commonly used in research about immigration. It is defined by Redfield et al. (1936, p149) (quoted by Sam and Berry, 2006, p11) as:

“those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups”.

It is a dual-direction process, in which members of one cultural group adopt the values, beliefs, habits and language patterns from another group.

An alternative to acculturation is enculturation which presents a ‘common culture’ of the target language to learners in order to assimilate them into the host culture. Meanwhile, Harrison (1990) and Bassnett (1997) describe a critical approach to culture teaching with language learners, in which the curriculum goal is more to do with socio-political education rather than any other aims. Bassnett (1997) indicated that culture is always partly unknown or unrealized. This approach is suggested due to the impact of the social existence of various social and political pressures in terms of shaping national identities in societies. In this case, culture is officially supported by the government and its agencies through relative educational policies, standardized teaching material and directed teachers’ behaviour.

However in these approaches, which may be selectively brought into language classrooms, language proficiency still remains the primary goal of language teaching. And as the language develops over time, the society has a chance to adequately express the values and beliefs that it holds. Beyond information transmission, language is also about negotiation, construction and maintenance of individual and group identities (Corbett, 2003). In other words, language is a system of choices which are made depending on the context. Nault (2006) also indicated that native

speakers' language behaviours are heavily influenced by their cultural background. Here, culture involves the practice, norms and beliefs of a society which was historically created and adopted. It is more related to 'an entire way of life' rather than nationalities; it is not static but dynamic. These values are always being negotiated within the language group and will change over time. Consequently, in order to express and interpret meanings in the target language, learners have to do more than simply gain linguistic abilities.

Most recently, an intercultural communicative approach which emphasizes integration of culture into the EFL curriculum has been advocated. In this approach, intercultural communicative competence (ICC) is targeted instead of native speaker competence. In an intercultural approach, the goals of cultural tasks normally involve a combination of intercultural exploration and linguistic development. Learners are put in the position of mediator between different social groups that use various languages. In other words, intercultural understanding and the improvement of learners' language skills are emphasized equally in language education in an intercultural approach. Some features of earlier approaches to culture in the communicative curriculum are included in the intercultural approach such as: 'culture topics are interesting and motivating', 'the improvement of culture awareness is an aspect of value education' and 'intercultural language education should cast critically reflective eyes on its own working' (Maley, 1993 and Corbett, 2003, p30).

Traditionally, in a general communicative language curriculum, cultural competence has been considered as accepted behaviour in the host community. In the intercultural approach, the learners are meant to reach a vantage point which Kramsch (1993) terms the 'third place', where the learners can understand and mediate between the home culture and target culture. In this case, culture competence in an intercultural approach refers to a more complex combination of valuable knowledge and skills. Byram (1997) concluded a few key formulations of cultural knowledge and skills which he called 'saviours': knowledge of self and

others; skills in cultural information discovery; critical awareness of cultural behaviours.

According to Corbett (2003), intercultural competence can be developed through targeting culture as the regular focus of information exchanged. This in turn will cause the learner to reflect upon their home culture and ultimately improve their awareness of culture differences.

In practice, this approach does not conflict with existing task-based or learner-centred curricula. In contrast, it serves as an extension of those current learning methods by offering more realistic goals in language education. Byram (1997) argues that only a few learners achieve native speaker linguistic competence. Graddol (2007) suggests that strong emphasis on the target of 'native speaker competence' results in the failure of language learning. Setting the target of 'native speaker' thus leads to a situation where the learners remain in the position of outsider and failure.

The target of intercultural communication competence may be developed through tasks such as: the investigation of daily conversation and behaviours of various communities and the exploration of the cultural messages conveyed by literature, media texts and visual images. Learners' intercultural competence is developed through the discussion, interpretation and evaluation of written or spoken texts, visual images and media texts and the cultural messages they convey. In the intercultural approach, teachers serve as guides and advisors, providing task materials according to students' learning stages. As their competence improves, learners are allowed more freedom to integrate their own interests into the educational programme which in fact drives the improvement of their intercultural competence.

In the case of China, where teaching English has always been considered as a foreign language, the intercultural communicative approach has not received widespread support (Yu, 2001). Traditionally, the grammar-translation approach dominated many EFL classrooms in China (Hu, 2001). It has been criticized for its failure to

develop an urgently needed adequate level of communicative competences in millions of Chinese learners. For example, Ng & Tang (1997) found that, Chinese students had little ability to speak and understand English in a practical context. With the launch of the Open Door policy, when the use of English as an international means of communication became increasing common, the communicative approach to English teaching was first brought into China. It was formalized in the late 1980s in the national syllabus through a top-down EFL reformation. A series of actions for the promotion of the communicative language teaching approach have been carried out, such as syllabus modification, textbook production, skill-orientated examinations development and updated teacher training (Hu, 2002b). However, there has always been a difference of opinion about this approach, especially from schools where various approaches may be applied in practice. The argument regarding whether the communicative approach is really superior to traditional English teaching still exists in the Chinese foreign language teaching community. The application of a communicative approach in China has been impeded by various factors, such as a lack of necessary resources, large class sizes, limited instruction time, teachers' lack of language proficiency and sociolinguistic competence, as well as exam pressures (Yu, 2001 and Hu, 2001). Meanwhile, Scollon (1999) indicates that the slow spread of the communicative approach in China is due to conflict between concepts of the communicative approach and traditional Chinese beliefs about attitudes to teaching and learning.

It may be dangerous to generalize about the cultural behaviour of a huge and changing society such as China. However, it is indubitable that Confucianism has a strong influence on Chinese conceptions of education (Scollon, 1999 and Lee, 2000). Traditionally, Chinese educational ideology emphasizes the maintenance of a harmonious relation between teacher and student. Students are trained to be obedient and respectful towards teachers. From early childhood, the belief of seeing teachers as rulers in education has been deeply rooted in students' minds. In this case, students are not encouraged, and it is hard for them, to voice opinions in class. Although students may be eager to improve their communicative competence with

the development of globalization, old learning habits bring extra difficulties to their improvement.

Besides reasons embedded in Chinese tradition, the English teaching community faces other issues that may also contribute to current difficulties in spreading the communicative language teaching approach. Thus, it is necessary to examine the history of the EFL subject in China, especially its development after 1949, when the People's Republic of China was founded.

3.4 The English curriculum in China

The teaching of English in schools around the world has been motivated by a variety of reasons, such as national reconstruction, unifying the lingua franca for administration, trade and scientific progress, as well as a means for facilitating international communication.

In China, the learning of English has a long history. English learning first featured in the syllabus of schools in 1902. The goal was initially to gain access to scientific and technical knowledge in order to strengthen the nation against foreign encroachment. Teaching methods focused on grammar and vocabulary learning with pronunciation learned by imitation and repetition. Twenty years later, listening and speaking skills were added in English language learning as schools moved away from the Japanese system of education to a more Western model. After the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, the purpose of education claimed to be "to serve the proletariat" (Tsang, 2000a, p5).

The role of English as a school subject has fluctuated throughout the history of the PRC. The complex social and historical context poses particular problems for the development of the EFL curriculum. Before 1961, English was considered as a means to get 'access to scientific and technical information'. In the 1960s EFL was considered as a tool to develop cultural and scientific knowledge, up until the Cultural Revolution (1967-1976) period when most school subjects were used as

vehicles for propaganda. Since the launch of Open Door policy in 1978, the promotion of EFL has been enthusiastically endorsed by policy makers due to economic considerations and the urgent need for technological transfer from Western nations. Today, English skills are considered as an important means for acquiring technological expertise and for fostering international trade. Thus, the principal purpose of the EFL subject in schools is to enhance the comprehensive competence of Chinese people, enabling China to operate effectively on the international political and economic stage.

Various agencies are involved in English curriculum policy making and implementation process, including the Ministry of Education (MoE), the People's Education Press (PEP), and other agencies. The MoE, formerly the State Education Commission (SEC), takes charge of national curriculum policy decision making. The People's Education Press (PEP) produces national syllabi⁹, textbooks and other teaching materials. Linguistic educators in Higher Education institutions work as consultants to assist in the design of the national syllabus and textbooks. Teachers directly implement the syllabus and use textbooks in classroom teaching. Sometimes, they are also asked to provide feedback for revision of the syllabus and textbooks.

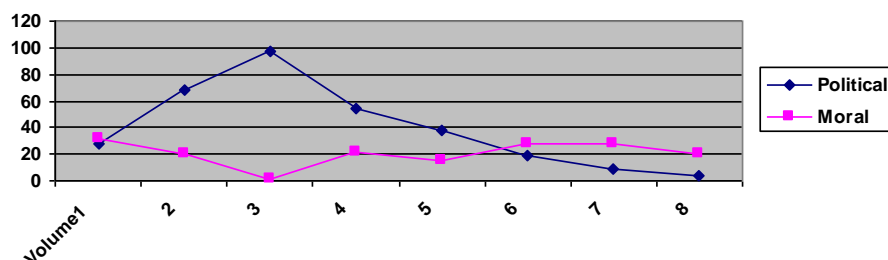
As a part of the literature review, the following section will review the development of the EFL curriculum in the PRC from a historical perspective. There will be three main points of focus: the relationship between EFL subject and the State goal, the curriculum making process and the ideological messages found in EFL textbooks.

The conflicting and shifting ideological context in Chinese society has to be taken into account for the selection of both curriculum content and pedagogical approaches. In other words, change in the EFL curriculum was driven by China's socio-political climate. Foreign language teaching in education, especially of English, has been linked to promoting political, economic and academic State goals in China. As a language subject, the EFL curriculum has been more sensitive to political shifts than

⁹ There have been changes in the use of terminology. To describe the standard content of EFL subject, the term 'syllabus' was used in educational documents in China between 1956 and 2000; it was switched back to 'curriculum' in 2001.

other school subject because of the strong link between language and culture. This explains why the developing stages of the EFL curriculum in the PRC do not exactly match the ones of its educational system, which was discussed in chapter Two. Although the development of the EFL curriculum was influenced by changes to the educational system (i.e. decentralization) in the PRC, State goals often acted as the trigger for EFL curriculum change (Adamson, 2004). Overall, the focus of the EFL subject has shifted from political purposes to economic and academic goals.

Adamson's (2004) research shows that the EFL curriculum in Chinese Basic Education has always been considered as a vehicle for spreading ideological messages throughout the history of the PRC. Mainly, these messages were delivered through the content of textbooks. Over the years, the proportion of political and moral passages in EFL textbooks has changed. In general, there is an emerging trend of de-politicization in the content of EFL textbooks. In particular, after the production of Volume 6, EFL textbooks started to contain more moral than political messages. (Chart 3.1: percentage of political and moral passages in textbook Volumes 1-8)



3.4.1 Soviet influence: 1949-1960

In 1950s, under Soviet influence, the State established a politically-loaded educational system. Education in China then aimed at maintaining a balance between 'political and academic' purpose and cultivated students to be both 'red and expert' (Lewin, 1994). Owing to the close relationship between the new PRC and Russia, English was replaced by Russian as the only foreign language taught in Chinese

schools. This period did not last long. English was soon reinstated although English teaching and learning still followed the Russian model with a rather traditional methodology, - following a teacher-centred grammar-translation approach.

Reflecting this heavy Soviet influence, the goal of the EFL syllabus in 1950s was to ‘motivate students to continue to learn English in the future and providing them with relevant knowledge, skills, and techniques’ (PEP, 1958, p1).

The production of the EFL syllabus and textbooks at this stage was centralized by the MoE and carried out by staff in higher educational institutions. The People’s Education Press was established in 1950 to produce a national syllabus and textbooks for the new education system. However, at this initial stage, the PEP was short of experienced syllabus designers and textbook writers for the EFL subject. Thus, the Ministry of Education organized a group of staff in higher educational institutions to carry out these tasks. Educators in the Beijing Foreign Languages Institute (Volumes 1 and 2), the Shanghai Foreign Languages Institution (Volume 2) and Beijing Normal University (Volume 3) were commissioned to write EFL textbooks. (Table 3.1: Soviet influence, Adamson, 2004, P206)

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Textbook</i>	<i>Political (%)</i>	<i>Moral (%)</i>
<i>Soviet influence: 1949-1960</i>	<i>Volume 1</i>	27.66	31.91
	<i>Volume 2</i>	67.65	20.59
	<i>Volume 3</i>	96.80	0.80

At this stage, the EFL curriculum was linked to State goals to seek the appropriate balance between political loyalty and expertise. Under heavy Soviet influence, PEP published three volumes of textbooks which contained a significant proportion of political texts.

Volumes 1 and 2 were produced for secondary schools only. They struggled to maintain a balance between ideological, social, linguistic and pedagogical concerns. Volume 1 was planned as a platform to display political antipathy towards Western

nations and to promote prevailing political ideology. Many of the texts in Volume 1 were borrowed directly from Soviet textbooks. Adamson and Morris (1997, P7)'s research shows that stories in Volume 1 cover "everyday anecdotes to overtly politicized materials, much of which is oriented toward promoting a strong sense of national identity." For example, relevant examples contained in 'On National Day': describes students waving to Chairman Mao; and 'The Chinese people work hard and love peace' (Adamson, 2004, p241).

Later, when the political climate changed and Soviet influence became less desirable, Volume 1 was criticized by the Communist Party of China for its inefficient and unrealistic ideological messages that were heavily influenced by the Soviet Union. In Volume 2, many of the original texts were retained and others in a similar political vein were added. However, rather than borrowing texts from Soviet textbooks, writers translated political texts from Chinese language textbooks.

Around the same period, PEP published Volume 3 which was tested in selected schools. The content strongly reflected the climate of 'political to the fore', as the majority of texts were "selected political documents and moralizing stories and poems translated into English" (Adamson and Morris, 1997, p11). Political messages take up 96.8% of all passages in Volume 3 textbooks and this volume was soon abandoned. It was criticized for being "not complied according to linguistic theory but instructions from the then authorities" (Tang Jun, 1995, cited by Adamson and Morris, 1997, p9). For example, it began with 'Long Live (name of political leaders)', and no text dealing with a foreign theme was included. Aside from regional textbooks used in the Cultural Revolution period, the proportion of political passages in EFL textbooks reached its peak in Volume 3.

3.4.2 Towards an economic modernization: 1961-1966

In the early 1960s, the State goal shifted towards a stronger emphasis on economic modernization. This was reflected in the reduction of overtly political elements in the EFL curriculum. A series of bottom-up curriculum reforms and experiments were

carried out, in order to break away from Soviet models, reduce direct political indoctrination and improve educational quality. For example, the National Cultural and Educational Conference in 1960 recommended a revision of the syllabus and national textbooks, and the long-term nationwide introduction of English in primary schools (PEP, 1963). However, due to the regional diversity of the development of the EFL subject, English only began being taught in some primary schools on a trial basis.

In 1963, a new EFL syllabus was established by a group of scholars following a study on the English education experience in China and some Western countries. Apart from developing scientific and technological knowledge, English was targeted as a means of developing cultural knowledge and fostering cultural exchanges. Moreover, this syllabus made mention of ‘*increasing understanding between peoples of different countries*’, although the international experiences sharing activities are still clearly politically directed as the intention was ‘*to share our experiences with friendly countries and people*’ and ‘*to empower people in different countries to combat imperialism*’ (PEP, 1963, p1).

In terms of the progress of the curriculum, clearly defined roles were given to various factions, including the Ministry of Education, PEP, outside agencies and teachers. The MoE was in charge of organizing national conferences to call for educational reform. The PEP, as a unit of the MoE, was responsible for producing the syllabus and textbooks, with input from outside agencies and teachers. These outside agencies, mainly scholars from higher educational institutions, influenced the syllabus and textbook production by serving on the editorial committee, while teachers were required to give suggestions and feedback. (Table 3.2: Towards an economic modernization, Adamson, 2004, P206)

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Textbook</i>	<i>Political</i> (%)	<i>Moral</i> (%)
<i>Towards an economic modernization: 1961-1966</i>	<i>Volume 4</i>	54.87	21.95
	<i>Volume 5</i>	37.29	14.69

During this stage, the PEP published two sets of EFL textbooks: Volume 4 (published between 1961 and 1962) and Volume 5 (published to accompany the 1963 syllabus). Volume 4 includes eight primary textbooks for primaries 2 to 5 and three junior secondary textbooks. This volume emphasized the development of both spoken and written skills in EFL subject.

Volume 4 retained a strong patriotic or socialist sense. It reflected the political climate of the Great Leap Forward¹⁰, while some messages contained the collective 'People's Communes'. Compared to its earlier versions, texts in Volume 4 contained more about daily lives and those negatively portraying other countries were spare rare (Adamson and Morris, 1997).

Based on the 1963 syllabus, Volume 5 was designed for students starting English at secondary level under the existing system. In Volume 5, although oral skills were emphasized in the first two books, the grammar-translation approach dominated English teaching from Book 3. To respond to an increasing demand for educational quality improvement at this stage, this volume was developed with less direct political indoctrination, compared to Volumes 2, 3 and 4. However, it reflected the political climate of early 1960s, when 'People's communes' became unacceptable and Sino-American tensions were growing, so ideological tracts remained. For example, it contains topics such as 'Imperialism Will Not Last Long' (Book5, Lesson2) and 'Imperialism And All Reactionaries Are Paper Tigers (Book6, Lesson1)' (Adamson, 2004, p103).

3.4.3 Cultural Revolution: 1967-1976

During the decade of the Cultural Revolution, when intense political activities overturned many aspects of Chinese society and disrupted formal education in PRC, the EFL subject was turned into a tool for political propaganda. Recognized as a tool

¹⁰ The Great Leap Forward was a radical economic and social campaign the Communist Party of China launched between 1958 and 1960. Through boosting the development of industrialization and collectivization, it aimed at rapidly transforming the country from an agrarian economy to a modern society. However, this policy ended as a failure and led to an economic regression.

to build connections with other countries, especially Western countries, English teaching stopped in most schools. Some English educators were accused of spying for other countries or for worshipping everything foreign and the PEP was disbanded.

After 1970, English started to reappear on the curriculum in some schools. However, no new syllabus was issued and the regional textbooks, which focused on reading and writing skills, were dominated by the translation of political slogans.

There were no national EFL textbooks produced during Cultural Revolution (1967-1977). Textbooks used in classrooms were produced at the provincial and municipal levels with the focus on political propaganda. These textbooks focused on developing reading and writing skills and little attention was paid to speaking (Adamson and Morris, 1997).

3.4.4 Modernization under Open Door Policy: 1977-1992

1978 syllabus

The Cultural Revolution finally came to an end in 1976. The State reactivated a number of economic policies, such as the Four Modernizations¹¹. After Deng Xiaoping took control as a leader of the Communist Party of China, the State launched the Open Door Policy which encouraged international trade to develop China's economy. With the move towards a prioritized economic focus, education was perceived by the government as playing a vital role to achieve these State goals. To get access to the world, English skills became desirable once again. Consequently, a series of curriculum innovations for the EFL subject were carried out with focus on both economic and academic goals.

To support the new policy of national economic development, the government called for a change of national syllabus and textbooks in 1977. Later, the Ministry of Education started a new round of curriculum development for Basic Education. It

¹¹ It was initially introduced in 1963, to strengthen the fields of agriculture, industry, national defence, and science and technology.

announced a plan to start teaching a foreign language in schools in some major cities from primary 3. For the rest of the country, foreign language classes began at the first year of junior secondary school.

In 1978, a new EFL syllabus and textbooks (Volume 6) were produced by the PEP. The syllabus reflected the uncertain social-political climate of this period, as it ‘utilized the rhetoric of both the politics-oriented and economics-oriented camps’ (Adamson, 2004, p135). According to [Adamson’s] translation, in this 1978 syllabus, English was described as a very important means for ‘*international class struggle; for economic and trade relationships; for cultural, scientific and technological exchange; and for the development of international friendship*’ (PEP, 1978, p1; translated by Adamson, 2004, p135).

The PEP, which was closed during Cultural Revolution, was re-established in 1978. However, many of its former staff had been rusticated or dispersed during the Cultural Revolution. Shorted-staffed, the PEP heavily relied on assistance from outside agencies for syllabus and textbook design, although the final decisions were made by leaders of the PEP. For example, to design the 1978 EFL syllabus and Volume 6 textbooks, the PEP organized a group of textbook writers and experienced educators in the EFL subject, including scholars from the Beijing Foreign Languages Institute and the English Department of the Shanghai Foreign Languages Institute. Owing to the urgent need for a new curriculum to accompany the change of State goal, the design team was asked to work under a time constraint. This 1978 EFL syllabus and the Volume 6 textbooks were completed in a rush, without time to access a wide range of materials. (Table 3.3: Modernization under Open Door Policy (1), Adamson, 2004, P206)

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Textbook</i>	<i>Political (%)</i>	<i>Moral (%)</i>
<i>Modernization under Open Door Policy</i>	<i>Volume 6</i>	<i>19.02</i>	<i>28.22</i>

Following a trial in a few schools, this volume was criticized by teachers regarding its political content and advanced linguistic knowledge which inhibited students’

learning. Consequently, a revision of Volume 6 was published. Although it still mainly followed an audio-lingual and grammar-translation approach, more topics regarding student's everyday life were added.

In terms of ideological messages, this revised Volume 6 contained far less overtly political materials than ever before, since the founding of the PRC in 1949. It still regularly referred to socialism and Marxism, although political leaders were only occasionally mentioned. Differing from previous versions, this volume contained positive portrayal of foreigners. For example, a story about 'Sir Rowland Hill who came up with the concept of cheap postage stamps for poor people' was added. Meanwhile, more attention was paid to Moral Education through the EFL subject. This volume contained stories with strong moral messages, such as the 'the Hare and the Tortoise' (Adamson and Morris, 1997, p19).

1982 syllabus

Between 1981 and 1982, the government called for a revision of the 1978 EFL syllabus to keep up with the strong economic orientation of State policies. Unlike the 1978 syllabus, this 1982 syllabus was designed during a period of low politicization. The EFL subject was recognized as an extremely important tool in China's economic growth. Accordingly, the EFL subject was given higher official status in schooling. English was perceived as "*an important tool for learning cultural and scientific knowledge; to acquire information in different fields from around the world; and to develop international communication*" (PEP, 1987, p1, translated by Adamson, 2004).

This 1982 syllabus and the Volume 7 textbooks were produced by the PEP with assistance from outside agencies in the Beijing Foreign Language Institute. Educators from this university acted as consultants and classroom teachers were asked to provide feedback. By this time, the PEP was much stronger in terms of human resources; in fact it was the only publisher of textbooks. This time, the PEP was in charge of syllabus design, and this syllabus and Volume 7 were designed

together. However, the syllabus was not published until 1986. Adamson (2004, p155) noted that

“it was not thought to be necessary to make a syllabus publicly available before the preparation of textbook resources. The publication of the syllabus merely served to reinforce the legitimacy of textbooks”.

(Table 3.4: Modernization under Open Door Policy (2), Adamson, 2004, P206)

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Textbook</i>	<i>Political (%)</i>	<i>Moral (%)</i>
<i>Modernization under Open Door Policy</i>	<i>Volume 7</i>	<i>8.28</i>	<i>27.81</i>

Volume 7 reflected the growing need to improve students' competence in English, especially as communicating with foreigners was an increasingly common occurrence. Instead of a grammar-translation approach, a communicative pedagogical style appears in this volume of textbooks, providing 'realistic everyday English' to students.

In terms of ideological messages, there was less concentration on promoting a negative impression of foreign countries, compared to Volume 6. This volume focused more on moral than on political themes. The moral messages contain advice on appropriate behaviours, such as working hard, respecting elders, personal hygiene and expected manners in the classroom, school and in public (Adamson, 2004).

3.4.5 Integrating with globalization: 1993 onwards

Although changes were made in the 1982 syllabus, EFL teaching in the late 1980s and early 1990s was still criticized for its grammar-translation approach and dated materials. Meanwhile, following the decentralization of the educational system in the PRC, the government called for curriculum innovation in the EFL subject. In 1993, the PEP published a new EFL syllabus, in which foreign languages, especially English, were described as *'an important tool for making contact with other*

countries’ and as *‘promoting the development of the national and world economy, science and culture’*. Here, the EFL curriculum was established with a clear economic motivation in mind, in order to meet *‘the needs of our Open Door Policy and speeding up socialist modernization’* (PEP, 1993, p1; translated by Adamson, 2004, p173). Alongside this 1993 national syllabus, regional syllabi were allowed to be designed and used in Shanghai and Zhejiang to accommodate the local educational situation.

In the 1993 EFL syllabus, the target of the EFL subject in China was set as *‘cross cultural communicative competence’* (PEP, 1993, p1). This reflected the continuing importance of English in a world that is increasingly interconnected due to globalization. English has been widely adopted as the lingua franca for business, information technology, international travel, the internet, cultural entertainment, and the environment. All of the aforementioned impact on every aspect of our lives, and as a consequence, the communicative approach to English teaching in China has been carefully considered by English language teaching professionals since the late 1980s.

Finally, the previous grammar-translation based national unified EFL syllabus was replaced with a new communication targeted one in 1993. Here, students’ improvements in English communication competence, listening, speaking, reading and writing skills were emphasized (PEP, 1993). This syllabus also, for the first time, contained requirements towards *‘culture in EFL subject’*. It emphasized the close connection between language and culture and the importance of learning about the target culture as a means to improve English as well as to strengthen the understanding of local culture.

At this stage, to respond to the crisis in quality of EFL teaching, the government requested the Curriculum and Teaching Materials Research Institute¹² (CTMRI) to

¹² CTMRI was established in 1983 by the MoE, in order to strengthen research on the curriculum and teaching materials for basic education. It shares the same staff as the PEP press.

carry out research regarding curriculum development. In a way, CTMRI formalized the relationship between the PEP and outside agencies.

Additionally, in order to better fulfil the special regional needs of English education, and also influenced by the decentralization of the educational system in China, the State Education Commission allowed alternative textbooks to be produced by different agencies. Alongside the PEP, publishers organized by higher educational institutions such as Beijing Normal University, the South East Normal University, Sichuan Educational Science Institute and the South West Normal University were authorized to design EFL textbooks. A National Evaluation Committee of Primary and Secondary School Textbooks (NECPSSST) were set up to process these projects. (Table 3.5: Integrating with globalization, Adamson, 2004, P206)

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Textbook</i>	<i>Political (%)</i>	<i>Moral (%)</i>
<i>Integrating with globalization: 1993 onwards</i>	<i>Volume 8</i>	<i>4.37</i>	<i>19.76</i>

Although there were several volumes of textbooks available at this stage, 70% of secondary schools adopted the PEP textbook ‘Junior English for China’ (Volume 8). This volume was designed under the co-operation of the PEP, Longman International Publishing Company and the United Nations Development Programme. For the first time in the history of PRC, foreign agencies participated in the development of EFL textbooks. Longman International Publishing Company provided one consultant and two writers and the PEP provided one chief editor and a team of writers. Today, this China-West co-operation is the most popular format for EFL textbook production in the PRC.

In Volume 8, the use of communicative English in specific socio-cultural contexts was specially emphasized. Topics involving the everyday life of Chinese and Western children in Chinese contexts were included. The target culture was set as the cultures of the US, UK and Australia and cultural information was presented through the introduction of food, festivals, places of interests and sports.

3.4.6 2001 EFL curriculum

Taking into account the effects of globalization, Chinese policy makers and educators have carefully evaluated whether the national syllabus was suitable for China's sustainable development. As a result, the government called for a new round of curriculum redevelopment in 1999. As a preparation of this curriculum reform, the MoE established a new agency, the National Centre for School Curriculum and Textbook Development (NCCT). Organized by the MoE and NCCT, the design of a new curriculum (this term replaced 'syllabus', although the framework of this document remains) for EFL subject during the nine-year compulsory education period from primary school to secondary school was carried out. A new curriculum was later published by PEP in 2001. This document replaced the previous regional EFL syllabi, which were used as guidelines for English teaching in Chinese primary schools. It is considered an improvement in English teaching and learning in Chinese Basic Education by some interviewees. However the researcher would like to argue that the use of a new term did not change the nature of this document.

A curriculum subsumes a syllabus. The latter refers to the content matter of an individual subject, whereas 'curriculum' refers to the "totality of content to be taught and aims to be realized within one school or educational system" (White, 1988, p4). Following the American model, the term 'curriculum standard' was always used in the EFL subject in the Chinese educational system until the 1950s. Due to the influence of Soviet Union, 'teaching syllabi' was adopted in 1956 and continued to be used until 2000. However, 'teaching syllabi' and 'curriculum standard' shared similar principles: content, outcomes pedagogy and assessment.

Regardless of the term used, this document serves as a national structural standard for the EFL subject in primary education. It recognized foreign languages as an essential competence for both learners' personal development and intercultural communication. Compared to previous syllabi, this version emphasized learners' 'intercultural communication competence'.

The new curriculum emphasised the comprehensive improvement of students' communication competence which is addressed through five dimensions: language skills, language knowledge, affect and attitude, learning strategies and cultural awareness. Each of them is addressed as follows: (Table 3.6: 2001 EFL curriculum)

Language skills	Listening, speaking, reading and writing
Language knowledge	Pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar
Affect and attitude	Motivation, confidence, collaboration, motherland consciousness and international view.
Learning strategy	Adjustment strategy, communicative strategy and resource strategy.
Cultural awareness	Cultural knowledge, cultural understanding, international communication awareness and competence.

According to the new standard, eight levels are set to evaluate learners' improvement in these five dimensions. For each level, detailed targets are instituted for each dimension. This requirement may be adjusted locally depending on the quality and need for education in various areas.

Generally, in terms of comprehensive English competence, student targets include: motivation in English language learning; ability to follow basic instructions; singing basic English songs; ability to understand short written or spoken English stories with the help of visual aids; to be able to handle communication regarding basic personal information and feelings; basic literacy competence; to be interested in foreign culture as it occurs in English learning.

Compared to previous EFL syllabuses, this 2001 curriculum provided a definition of 'culture in EFL' as "*the history, geography, costume and habit, tradition, arts and literature, norms and values of English-speaking countries*" (PEP, 2001, p22).

It also reinforced the importance of ‘culture learning’ by providing a series of detailed expectations on culture learning at the level of senior secondary school.

To accompany the 2001 EFL curriculum, several volumes of EFL textbooks were produced by various publishers, with the authorization of Ministry of Education. These textbooks included adapted foreign textbooks from English-speaking countries and original textbooks designed with the co-operation of Chinese and foreign education agencies. According to the list of authorized textbooks published by the MoE in 2009, there were 26 volumes of EFL textbooks available to be used in primary schools throughout China. Three of them were published by the PEP, with co-operation from publishers in Singapore and Canada. The ‘New Version of Primary English’ (NV English) and ‘PEP Primary English’ (PEP English) were adopted by most schools as the national textbook. These two volumes both contain 8 books for pupils from primary 3 to primary 6. They follow a task-based English teaching approach and contain topics which are related to the daily life of Children in China and around the world. English-speaking countries including UK, US, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Singapore are always mentioned when a worldwide situation is referred to and target culture knowledge is delivered through the introduction of national symbols, food, festivals and sports.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter described the changes of EFL curriculum and textbooks design in China. In terms of curriculum making, from a historical perspective, several key players were involved in providing EFL curriculum in China, including the State, the People's Education Press, scholars and teachers. Their roles have been changing in different periods. Overall, in the past, the EFL curriculum making followed a top-down approach. The production of the EFL curriculum and textbooks was centralised by the State, and carried out by several agencies, including PEP, scholars in universities and teachers. In 1950s, the PEP was established to produce national syllabi and textbooks. As a unit of the MoE, the PEP was the only authorised publisher for national curriculum and textbooks. However, due to a lack of experienced staff in the PEP, there were other agencies involved in the production of the EFL national curriculum and textbooks. In a way, the PEP has been heavily relying on assistance from scholars in universities for the EFL national curriculum and textbooks design. Meanwhile, teachers participate in textbook production as feedback providers.

With the decentralization of Chinese educational system, from 1993, more publishers were authorized to design and publish EFL textbooks. The PEP is no longer the only provider of national textbooks; it has to compete with other authorized publishers in the textbook market. It is possible that the relations among key players in curriculum making have also changed. Thus the power dynamic in the latest EFL curriculum making drew the researcher's attention.

This chapter has drawn attention to the launch of the Open Door policy, which made English skills, especially the ability to communicate in English, increasingly desirable. To improve the quality of EFL subject in schooling, educators decided to replace the traditional 'grammar-translation approach' with a 'communicative approach' in the early 1990s. This began with the 1983 syllabus and developed in the 1993 and 2001 curriculum with an increasingly strong emphasis on the development of 'intercultural communicative competence'. It was noted that, to accompany this

EFL curriculum, several volumes of textbooks were designed with the insertion of both local and foreign cultural information, by the PEP and other agencies.

In the PRC, the design of the EFL syllabus had strong links with the State's goals. It was driven by political ideology due to the recognized association between English language and the Western world. Later, as the State's goals developed a stronger economic focus, there was a 'de-politicization' of the EFL curriculum. Consequently, more attention was paid to developing the quality of English teaching and learning.

Traditionally, EFL subject in the PRC was dominated by a grammar-translation approach. Meanwhile, it has always been perceived as a vehicle to spread ideological messages. In its early stages, the EFL subject was politically loaded. With the move towards a stronger economic focus, the proportion of political messages in EFL textbooks has continued to decline. At the same time, moral messages, mainly about appropriate behaviours, remain in EFL textbooks.

In fact, these EFL textbooks appear to be exceptionally important for the analysis of cultural values embedded in the curriculum, in order to explore the power dynamic of curriculum making. This becomes the key area of research. As noted in the introduction, this research questions "have the national EFL textbooks developed as a medium for the transmission of cultural values". To address and answer this research question, the following chapter will provide an introduction of the methods used to integrate this research agenda.

Chapter Four: Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapters set out a literature background for this research. Chapter One built a theoretical framework on the issue of cultural reproduction in education. Chapter Two reviewed the development of education policy and national curriculum in China. Chapter Three provided an overview of the development of the EFL curriculum in China. It drew attention to the key concern for this research when it noted the power dynamic in curriculum design, which is recognized as a process of knowledge and culture reproduction.

Now it is possible to elaborate upon the research questions and to delineate the methods to be used. As noted, this research focuses on the transmission of cultural values through the production of EFL textbooks for Chinese Primary Education. Firstly, in light of the research questions, this chapter clarifies the research design. It will become evident that a variety of design considerations have produced this particular approach. Then, it moves to a discussion of the methods used, the data collection and the analysis of data.

4.2 Research design

Based on an understanding of constructivism, this research is influenced by critical theory. In contrast to positivism, critical theory claims that, knowledge about the social world is constructed. It is indicated that, reality is actively shaped by various factors, such as social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender values. Thus, the social world should be understood in a structural context, where shared ideologies may coexist.

It is believed that there is no universal truth and that our constructed knowledge is more or less an approximation. Knowledge may come from reality; however it does not always represent that 'reality'. As Guba and Lincoln noted (1989, p26):

“it is not the physical reality of objects, contexts and events that are of interest, it is the meanings human beings attach to them. Those meanings are the stuff of a structured reality.”

What enquirers have always been trying to make sense of is the transaction between the world and their personal frameworks of reference. In other words, what we know is what we take from reality from our own perspective which is shaped through our experiences. Thus, knowledge is not necessarily 'truth', but the result of social construction. The features of this construction depend upon what framework of reference is used. Each framework provides specific values, which should be understood within in a specific context: a value may only be inclusively shared by a certain group of individuals; and it may change over time. Therefore, all we can have is temporarily confirmed knowledge. In social research, no researcher can give an authoritative account of findings about the social world of another, because there are no fixed meanings to be captured (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994).

It is argued, therefore, that the understanding of knowledge and truth is reflected in the theoretical framework of the investigation into cultural value transmission through EFL textbooks and the curriculum.

This research is designed on the basis of the theoretical framework set out in the previous chapters. Here, educational policy is recognized as discourse, which implies a series of socially constructed positions. A policy is the result of the power dynamic existing between interest groups. As a part of educational policy, the curriculum is no exception. A curriculum is usually created through a series of struggles and compromises over meanings among interest groups. As an outcome, school knowledge is created through curriculum making. Instead of being ‘produced’, school knowledge is ‘reproduced’. It is often the winning groups’ knowledge, which represents this group’s culture, reproduced through these competitions and passed on through education. Therefore, an investigation on knowledge taught in school, as a product of curriculum making, helps to provide an insight of the power dynamic behind the creation process.

In the latest curriculum reform in China, the interrelation between language and culture was recognized. Thus, more cultural information was added into the 2001 EFL curriculum and textbooks. Based on the above understanding, this research explores the process of curriculum making in Chinese Primary Education, with the focus of the cultural value transmission in the EFL subject. As noted, the research asks: *has the national EFL textbook developed as a medium of the transmission of cultural values?*

In answering this question, the researcher also addressing these research-based issues:

- 1) *How is cultural value transmitted through textbooks ?*
- 2) *How is textbook design affected by curriculum policy within the context of Chinese Primary Education?*

This study on EFL textbooks illuminates the processes through which knowledge is reproduced in textbooks and through the curriculum. This research began with exploring the national EFL textbooks used in Chinese Primary Education, with the focus on the transmission of cultural values. Considering them as the outcome of knowledge and cultural reproduction, it is possible to understand the power dynamic between interest groups, by tracing the process of textbook design and curriculum

production. Furthermore, an investigation on the production of EFL textbooks and curriculum provides an insight into the power dynamic through which these cultural values are transmitted.

In keeping with the constructivist perspective, qualitative research methods were adopted. The aim is to find out how EFL textbooks are developed as a medium for the transmission of cultural values. Along with a description of the research context, this approach helps to provide a comprehensive understanding of the production of EFL textbooks and the curriculum. Moreover it provides an explanation of the impact of policy creation on cultural value transmission.

4.3 Data collection

This research aims to find out how curriculum policy effects the production of EFL textbooks in terms of the cultural values being transmitted. Documents on curriculum and education policy are particularly useful for understanding the context of policy reformation and the policy background pertaining to the production of new textbooks. In Chapters Two and Three, the researcher reviewed curriculum policies, especially for the subject of EFL, developed in the context of Chinese Basic Education.

4.3.1 Textbook analysis

The analysis of textbooks is essential to this research. Textbooks are seen as literature as well as data.

The researcher selected two volumes of textbooks, NV English and PEP English. They were both produced by the People's Education Press (PEP). This state-owned press is under the direct leadership of the Ministry of Education (MoE) of the PRC. As mentioned in Chapter Three, until 1993, the People's Education Press was exclusively authorized by the State Education Commission (now the MoE) to design the syllabi and textbooks for primary and secondary school subjects.

Although a number of agencies were involved in the production of textbooks under the censorship of the MoE, the People's Education Press dominates the textbook market for primary and secondary schools. For example, as stated in Chapter Three, the 8th Volume of EFL national textbooks which were produced by the PEP were used in 70% of secondary schools in China, although there were several other EFL textbooks available. According to their report, the PEP's market share in textbooks has continued to increase over the past few years (PEP, 2008, 2011a). Edward Vickers (2009a, p 526) comments that:

“While recent years have witnessed some opening up and diversification of the market for school textbooks in subjects such as English, curriculum development remains highly centralised, with the People's Education Press in Beijing retaining a key role in the Press. For most subjects, the PEP texts are still the default resources for school teachers, not least because the centralised system of curriculum development is paralleled by hierarchical arrangements for the setting of provincial and national examinations with PEP texts also serving as benchmarks for examiners.”

Indeed, this press also engages in research on curriculum and material design for Basic Education. In 1993, the Curriculum and Teaching Materials Research Institute (CTMRI) was established, with the same staff as the People's Education Press, with the authority of the MoE (PEP, 2011b). The CTMRI has compiled and published fourteen volumes of nationwide EFL textbooks and teaching materials for primary and Secondary Education in the past 60 years.

Based on the 2001 syllabus, PEP produced three volumes of textbooks, the 'New Version of Primary English' (NV English), 'PEP primary English' (PEP English) and 'Starting Line English' for Primary Education. Currently, although 30 volumes of EFL textbooks are use in Chinese primary schools, NV English and PEP English textbooks dominate the textbook market. They were produced in the same period, through a China-Singapore and China-Canada cooperative agreement. The approach of original textbook design with the cooperation of Chinese and foreign educational

agencies is considered to be the most effective way for material design in EFL Education (Hao and Li, 2004). The research on 'NV English' and 'PEP English' will provide a comprehensive overview of the original textbook design.

An initial analysis of two EFL textbooks as literature helped the researcher to define the targeted cultural values and locate the research questions. The results of this analysis will be presented in Chapter Five. A secondary textbook analysis was carried out after the completion of interviews. The results will be presented briefly in Chapter Six as part of the findings.

These EFL textbooks were designed as interactive learning materials which include text and pictures. In children's literacy, illustrations not only make the reading material attractive, but also reflect ideologies of culture. In textbook analysis, both text and illustrations in textbooks are analyzed. A number of issues are focused on: the narrative of texts and illustrations, the settings of illustrations, and the design of images (Nodelman and Reimer, 2002).

4.3.2 Interviews

In this research, apart from textbook analysis, data is collected mainly from semi-structured interviews, combined with a few focus groups. A number of literatures provide the discussion on the strengths and weakness of this interviewing approach. The approach adopted provides the opportunity to gain an insight into the values and experiences that are meaningful to respondents. It also allows interviewees to focus on specific topics that interest them and to introduce issues they perceive to be important. It also accommodates the short amount of time offered to interviewer for gathering targeted information through eliciting detailed responses to questions or challenging the respondent to make norms explicit (Atkinson, 1990; Coffey and Atkinson, 1996; Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Gilbert, 1993; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Warren, 2002; Stephens, 2007).

Two focus groups with classroom teachers were conducted. This choice was influenced by the situation in the field. It was difficult to fit interviews into some teachers' schedules. Thus, the researcher decided to conduct this part of data collection in a group format during the break time between lessons. However, these are more than group interviews, since the processes also involved interaction between teachers. Alongside the responses provided by teachers on specific questions, these group interactions also provide data and insight into the use of textbooks in schools (Morgan, 1997).

Between July 2009 and December 2009, the researcher conducted 21 interviews with educational administrators, curriculum designers, textbook writers and editors. All of which were either involved in the production of the 2001 EFL curriculum, NV English or PEP English. In addition, 2 interviews and 2 focus groups were carried out with ten classroom teachers in 4 primary schools. (Table 4.1)

Categories of interviewee/focus group participants	No of interviews/participants	Codes for interviewees
Educational administrators (MoE)	6	No.1 to No.6
Curriculum designers	3	No. 7,8,9
Textbook writers and editors	12	No. 10 to No.21
Classroom teachers	10 (2 interviews and 2 focus groups)	No.22 to No. 31
Total	31 (23 interviewees and 8 focus group participants)	

Interviews were conducted through a semi-structured approach. An interview guide organized around cultural values, the textbook production process and the EFL curriculum was used. In response to the way each interview progressed, the researcher made ongoing adjustments to this guide.

Most interviews were conducted face-to-face. Three interviews were conducted by telephone or using Skype, due to time or geographical restraints. This included an interview with a textbook writer who is based in Canada, and two Chinese interviewees who found it difficult to schedule a meeting. With permission from interviewees, most of the interviews were recorded. Five interviewees did not agree to their responses being recorded. The researcher took notes during all the interviews and, each evening after interviews transcribed the communications on the computer.

For the purpose of sampling, the researcher built up a sampling frame which covers potential interviewees' background information, especially their roles in textbook and curriculum design. However, some members of the relevant group were impossible to gain access to. Thus, based on this sampling frame, a snowball method was used (Seale, 2004). At the end of each interview, the researcher asked each interviewee who else might be a relevant person and whether they would be available for an interview. Most of the interviewees provided information about individuals who they identified as significant in some way, or introduced the researcher to their colleagues. Several interviewees who were missed by the sampling frame were located in this way. It also helped to reach those, who the researcher experienced difficulties getting access to in the first place. The actual number of interviewees, who are policy makers, exceeded the original plan. To some extent, the interconnectedness of the participants is an important factor in understanding the power dynamics in textbook and curriculum development. Later, it became an aid in the research process and contributed to the elaboration of the research findings.

Educational administrators and curriculum designers

To find out the process of curriculum policy making, the researcher intended to interview policy makers. However, the term 'policy maker' carries a broader meaning in the context of Chinese education policy making procedure. According to their current occupations, those who were involved in the production of the 2001 EFL curriculum policy were put into two categories: education administrators and curriculum designers.

Indeed, as noted in previous chapters, the PRC has a national system of public education, which includes primary schools, secondary schools (junior and senior), vocational schools and universities. Nine years of education (6 years Primary and 3 years Junior Secondary Education) is compulsory for all Chinese children. The education system is centralized and controlled by the MoE and its agencies. Two departments of Basic Education (DBE One and DBE Two) are responsible for the development of primary and Secondary Education. DBE One takes charge of general policy making, school management, Moral Education and health and security in schools. DBE Two takes charge of the development of curriculum and textbooks. Meanwhile, the National Centre for School Curriculum and Textbook Development (NCCT), as an agency of the MoE, was established in 1999 in time for the launch of the curriculum reformation for the beginning of the 21st century. The design of the 2001 EFL curriculum was organized by the MoE and the NCCT, and completed by a curriculum design team consisting of scholars.

Initially, five education administrators were targeted as prospective participants from the MoE including:

- Directors of DBE Two
- Head of NCCT
- Director of Division of Moral Education, DBE One
- Director of Division of Curriculum Development, DBE Two
- Director of Division of Textbook Management, DBE Two

The researcher made contact with the MoE directly according to the contact information provided on the official website. An interview request and a brief CV to clarify the researcher's nationality were required by two divisions in the MoE. After several approaches the researcher made contact with one director in DBE Two. With this person's help, eventually, the researcher managed to conduct six interviews with these education administrators in the MoE. With the help of two directors in the NCCT, the researcher gained access to three experts who were directly involved in the EFL curriculum and textbook production process.

Most interviews were conducted in their workplace during working hours, apart from one interview with a curriculum designer which was conducted by phone. Most of them refused to be recorded. The researcher took notes for all interviews with education administrators and curriculum designers.

Questions regarding education policy making, EFL curriculum design, cultural values and Moral Education, and textbook development and censorship were asked during interviews with civil servants and curriculum designers. (See appendix 1: Interview Topic Guide - Educational Administrators and Curriculum Designers)

Textbook editors and writers

According to the information provided in textbooks, all told, there were 40 writers and editors involved in the production of 'NV English' and 'PEP English'. Twenty-five of them worked for PEP; two experts were from the SNP in Singapore, eight writers and editors work for the Canadian Lingo Media Group Ltd. Five experts were from higher educational institutions in the UK and the US. Eight experts from PEP were involved in the production of both volumes of textbooks. One of them took charge of the cover and image design of the textbooks. In total, the researcher planned to interview 17 people, including 9 from the PEP, 5 from Canada Lingo Media Group and 3 from SNP. In addition, writers and editors who were involved in the development of both volumes of textbooks were preferred.

The researcher made initial contact with 17 editors and writers by sending an interview invitation by mail and email. Three participants agreed to be interviewed, including an editor in Canada. From the rest, there was no response at this stage. One of the three participants referred the researcher to another editor. The researcher made contact with this editor by telephone, and sent a brief introduction of this research with an interview guide by email. This editor agreed to attend an interview. Again, he introduced the researcher to a few of his colleagues after the interview, by providing their contact numbers and passing on interview requests.

Following this snowball approach, eventually, the researcher successfully gained access to 10 editors and writers who worked for PEP, one editor from Canada Lingo Media Group and one editor from Singapore SNP Ltd.

Most interviews were conducted in Mandarin in the meeting room of PEP during working hours, apart from three carried out in quiet coffee shops and one conducted via Skype.

During these interviews with textbook editors and writers, the researcher raised a series of questions including: the process of textbook design; planning of cultural value transmission through textbooks; cooperation between the Chinese publisher and international presses; and illustration in textbook design. (See appendix 2: Interview Topic Guide – Textbook Editors and Writers)

Classroom teachers

To find stories from EFL classrooms, in relation to the use of NV English and PEP English, two interviews and two focus groups were carried out. The focus of this research is the production of the national curriculum and textbooks, meanwhile, as supplementary data, teachers' opinions were investigated to identify their position in this policy process.

Ten English teachers were involved in this part of the data collection task, including three teachers in Tianjin city, four teachers in Jinghai and three teachers in Xi'an City. I conducted two interviews with teachers in Tianjin. For teachers in Jinghai (rural area near Tianjin) and Xi'an city, data was gathered through discussions in two focus groups. All interviews and focus groups were conducted in teachers' common rooms during class breaks.

Interviewees gave their opinions regarding the change of the EFL curriculum, in-service teacher training, and the use of textbooks in English teaching in terms of cultural value transmission. (See appendix 3: Interview Topic Guide: Teachers)

4.3.3 Ethical considerations and challenges in data collection

Informed consent and confidentiality

It is important for participants to be informed of a range of matters regarding an interview (Crow et al., 2006 and Williams, 2003). At the stage of making contact, I sent each potential participant an invitation for interview, including a brief introduction to this research, interview topics and use of research data. Before each interview, a consent form was presented to each interviewee. In this form the interviewees were informed that participants will remain anonymous, and all data collected will be used for academic research only and kept confidential. They were also asked if they would agree to be recorded. As noted earlier in this chapter, a few interviewees refused to be recorded. In terms of ensuring anonymity, the researcher has used only the occupation categories of the interviewees in this thesis. Any particular names or identities of the interviewees are avoided in presenting research findings.

Challenges in elite interviews

Mills (1957) provided a classic description of ‘an elite group’ as: people at the very top of a society, whose facilities of power are enormously enlarged and decisively centralized. In other words, elite members are those who decide on or influence the policy making process. Here, those interviewees who were involved in the design and approval of the 2001 EFL curriculum fall into this category. They include education administrators from the Ministry of Education in China, curriculum designers, and chief editors of NV English and PEP English. Curriculum designers and chief editors may not be necessarily equal to policy makers in terms of their proximity to power. However, they were directors in their organizations and were limited time to spare.

Interviewing elites contributes to the character of the power dynamic in the interview in several ways. The authority in the relationship between the researcher and

interviewees may be seen from the beginning. Limited responses from desired subjects usually give researchers a feeling of inadequacy about their research (Conti and O'Neil, 2007). Throughout the process of arranging and conducting interviews, it is important to be flexible in timetabling. A delay in the appointment or an interruption (such as phone calls) during the interview is not uncommon.

A benefit of an elite interview is that there is less need to protect the elite from the power of the researcher (Hertz and Imber, 1995). As Hermanowicz (2002) pointed out, interviewers are always trained to let their subjects be the authority in order to cultivate a sense of equality within the research setting. However, in elite interviews, the situation may be reversed. Many subjects are confident speakers and familiar with adopting the leading role in a conversation. Sometimes, it may lead to a departure from the topic of a conversation.

This research is for my PhD thesis. The obvious difference between a young PhD student and the subjects in age, experience and status may make it difficult for the interviewer to be taken seriously especially in the access stage (Odendahl and Shaw, 2002). Access to interviewees was not easy to obtain in this research. As Odendahl and Shaw (2002) mentioned, it not only requires extensive preparation but also the right contacts, and sometimes a little luck. Not surprisingly, 'gaining entry into elite settings' happened to be a challenge in the field work.

Initially, in order to get access to education administrators, the researcher contacted the Education Section in the Chinese Embassy in London which works closely with the MoE in Beijing. A reference from the Chinese Embassy may bring the researcher status in elite fields. Contact with the embassy was made by post and followed up with phone call a few days later. However, the researcher was told to contact the MoE directly according to the contact information provided on its official website. Thus, from the UK, the researcher phoned a few offices at the MoE in China. Apart from one extreme case, who rejected the interview request and any kind of further information by mail, fax or email; the researcher was asked to fax a request of interview and a brief CV to clarify current nationality to two offices. After a few

phone conversations with office assistants, the researcher managed to speak to one of the targeted interviewees. This person eventually agreed to arrange an informal meeting. However, it was very difficult to fit it into his/her schedule. Because of this, the researcher was referred to two of his/her colleagues and provided with their mobile numbers. A meeting with this person was not scheduled until the very end of this field work. However, he/she was valuable in directing the researcher to other interviewees, which practically opened the gate to the elite group. To some extent, making contact by calling people's mobiles does not only allow the researcher to avoid gatekeepers, but also works to create an identity of someone who is 'trusted and recommended' by an insider. Most of the interviewees referred one or more of their colleagues, that way they helped the researcher to make further contact and gave an insight into the 'internal network of power'.

4.4 Data analysis

The researcher followed a critical discourse analysis approach (CDA) to analyze the interview data. It is recognized that, language use is influenced or constructed by social systems. Conversely, power and ideology can be identified in texts. Fairclough (1995, p2) noted that:

"A range of properties of texts is regarded as potentially ideological, including features of vocabulary and metaphors, grammar, presuppositions and implicatures, politeness conventions, speech exchange (turn-taking) system, generic structure, and style."

The approach of CDA highlights the linguistic and discursive nature of power relations (Wodak, 1996). It provides an analytic framework to look at how power relations are exercised in discourse. To follow this approach, a text is analyzed through three dimensions: content (i.e. themes and topics), context (i.e. settings, participants and purpose) and linguistic form (i.e. discourse structure, transitions and vocabulary).

Interview data was analyzed following this procedure: organizing, integrating and presenting. Firstly, I transcribed 18 interviews and 2 focus groups, since 5 interviewees refused to be recorded. Interviews were first transcribed in Mandarin, the language in which they were conducted. Then I translated a few of them into English to assist in presenting the research findings. One interview with a Canadian editor was transcribed in English. (See Appendix 5 and 6 for two example transcripts)

Secondly, to reduce data, I identified several initial themes. These were the result of issues raised in the interviews.

- Cultural values
- Textbook design
- Textbook censorship
- Cooperation between foreign and local publishers
- Illustrations
- Curriculum design
- Education reform

At this stage, the researcher sorted interview data according to these themes; and summarized the general responses for each of them.

Thirdly, I moved on to the analysis on the linguist form and context of the interviewee data, such as terminology, use of vocabulary and relationships between interviewees. Data was coded according to this coding frame, with the focus of power relations of varies participants in each activity: (Table 4.2: Coding framework)

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rational for educational policy making • <i>Characters of participants</i> • <i>Strategy of policy making</i> - Transferring policy into practice • <i>Educational policy, Curriculum, textbooks</i> • <i>EFL vs. other subjects</i> - Interpretation of cultural value |
|---|

- Attitude towards local cultural value
 - *MoE*
 - *Curriculum designers*
 - *Textbook editors (Chinese and international editors)*
- Attitude towards other culture
 - *MoE*
 - *Curriculum designers*
 - *Textbook editors (Chinese and international editors)*
- Planned cultural value transmission
 - *Policy*
 - *National curriculum*
 - *Textbook*
- Unplanned cultural value transmission

A sample of complete coding sheet is attached in Appendix 4. This assisted the analysis at the final stage: seeking links between two or more phenomena and the power relations behind these phenomena.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the methods to be utilised in this research. It has been noted that textbook analysis, interviews and focus groups were used in this study.

It is not important to begin to present the interesting findings. A pictorial presentation of cultural values transmission in textbooks will be the subject of Chapter Five. It provides an understanding of certain cultural values implied in the textbooks under scrutiny. This provides an important basis for the development of subjects for interviews and focus groups. The subsequent presentation of research findings based on these interviews and focus group discussions forms the basis of Chapter Six.

Chapter Five: Textbook Analysis Findings

5.1 Introduction

In China, the EFL textbooks were considered not only as carriers of linguistic knowledge, but also a vehicle to deliver political and moral messages, although the focus of this task may change. In the 2001 EFL curriculum, the development of pupils' communicative competence was taken seriously, and efforts were made to develop pupils' cultural awareness in English language teaching. To accompany this curriculum, several new national textbooks were produced by various agencies. A number of foreign cultural elements, such as costumes, foods and sports were added to the teaching materials. Most existing research about Communicative English Teaching in China focuses on the challenges in pedagogy (Lee, 2000; Yu, 2001; Hu, 2002b; Li, 2006) and curriculum reform (Adamson and Morris, 1997; Zhu, 2003; Adamson, 2004). A few researchers have also paid attention to cultural themes in English teaching and teaching materials in secondary and Higher Education (Adamson and Morris, 1997; Jin, 2006; Suo, 2008 and Zhao, 2008). However, apart from references made by textbook writers within their reports, cultural themes in English teaching materials for primary schools have rarely been studied by researchers (Wu, 2004; Ji, 2008). In this analysis, the researcher studied two volumes of EFL textbooks for primary schools, NV English and PEP English, with the focus of cultural values.

As noted in the last chapter, in this research EFL textbooks are considered as both literature and data. The initial textbooks analysis provides an overview of the EFL textbooks that are currently in use. Its findings helped to define the target 'cultural values' and locate research questions. This chapter will provide a pictorial presentation of these initial findings.

Firstly, the researcher describes the design of textbooks. Secondly, a framework for this textbook analysis is given. Thirdly, this chapter presents findings from the initial analysis. A series of cultural values are found in EFL textbooks, including ‘Confucian philosophy of education’, ‘patriotism’, ‘respect and obedience’, ‘diligence’, ‘independence’, ‘collectivism’ and ‘gender role’.

5.2 The design of textbook

The NV English and PEP English textbooks currently dominate the textbook market. As mentioned in Chapter Four, these two volumes were produced in the same period, through a China-Singapore and China-Canada cooperative approach.

Working with the Canadian Press, Lingo Media Group, the PEP published ‘PEP English’ between 2003 and 2004. Lingo Media Corporation, which was founded in 1996, is a diversified online and print-based education product and services corporation. It has established partnerships with leading Chinese publishers since 2000 to develop EFL textbooks for students in China. This publishing activity was financially supported by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Government of Canada. CIDA, a leading agency for development assistance in Canada, was established in 1968 to administer Canada’s official development assistance programme (ODA). The purpose of ODA is to support sustainable development in developing countries, in order to reduce poverty, to advance Canadian values of global citizenship and to contribute to a more secure, equitable, and prosperous world. In China, expert training courses are funded by CIDA in areas such as human rights and Basic Education. They are administered by Canadian organizations rather than through the Chinese government or its agencies.

Meanwhile, PEP also cooperated with Singapore SNP Corporation Ltd (SNP), and published ‘NV English’. SNP Corporation Ltd is a leading media company whose core businesses are in printing and publishing. It grew out of Singapore National Printer Ltd (SNP) which in turn had its origins in the former Government Printing Office. Since 1973, SNP Corporation Ltd has been operating on a commercial basis.

It has 7 principal subsidiaries, 4 of which are in China and Hong Kong. SNP Corporation Ltd started its educational publishing business in 1987 when it acquired the Educational Publications Private Bureau Limited from the Ministry of Education in Singapore. In 2000, SNP Corporation Pte Ltd merged with the Pan Pacific Public Company Ltd. Currently, SNP Pan Pacific Publishing Ltd holds the leading position in the textbook market in Singapore and Hong Kong.

Each volume of textbooks contains 8 issues for pupils from grade 3 to grade 6. Each issue contains 6 units. Besides this, each issue of NV English has 2 extra sections named 'Fun Time'; while the PEP English has two 'Recycle' sections. They both follow a task-based English teaching approach and contain topics which are related to the daily life of children in China and around the world. To provide an example, Table 1 lists the contents of the first unit and one extra section in the 3rd issue of these two volumes of textbooks. (Table 5. 1: Contents of EFL textbooks for Grade4-Term1)

	NV English (Issue3, G4-1)	PEP English (Issue3, G4-1)
Grade	Primary 3-6	Primary 3-6
Issues	8	8
Units/per issue	6 units and 2 extra sections called 'Fun Time'	6 units and 2 extra sections called 'Recycle'.
Contents-Unit	This is my new friend Lesson1: Just speak <i>(conversation-greeting)</i> Just read and write <i>(words-country)</i> Let's play <i>(alphabetic)</i> Lesson2: Just speak <i>(conversation-friend)</i> Just read and write <i>(words-country)</i> Let's sing <i>(country)</i> Lesson3: Just speak <i>(conversation-friend)</i> Just read and write <i>(word-gender)</i>	My classroom A. Let's learn <i>(words-classroom furniture)</i> Let's do <i>(sentences-tidy up the classroom)</i> Let's talk <i>(conversation-classroom)</i> Let's chant <i>(chant- work and play)</i> Read and Write <i>(alphabetic)</i> Write and Say <i>(words)</i> B. Let's learn <i>(words-classroom)</i> Let's play <i>(game- bingo-words)</i> Let's talk <i>(conversation- tidy up)</i>

	Let's play (<i>alphabetic</i>) Lesson4: Just speak (<i>conversation-career</i>) Just read and write (<i>words-career</i>) Let's play (<i>role play-career</i>) Lesson5: Just speak (<i>conversation-parents</i>) Just read and write (<i>words-career</i>) Let's chant (<i>chant-career</i>) Lesson6: Fun story (<i>listening-story-career</i>) Just check (<i>listening-words-career</i>) Let's play (<i>revision-picture card-words</i>)	Let's play (<i>game- phrase card</i>) Read and Write (<i>alphabetic</i>) Write and Draw (<i>words</i>) C. Task time (<i>game- classroom</i>) Let's check (<i>listening- classroom</i>) Let's find out (<i>alphabetic</i>) Story time (<i>story-classroom</i>) Good to know (<i>classroom manners</i>) Let's sing (<i>song- In the classroom</i>)
Contents- extra section	Part1: Let's sing and play (<i>words-fruit</i>) Let's play (<i>words-fruit</i>) Let's chant (<i>words-number-fruit</i>) Let's make (<i>craft making</i>) Part2: Let's play (<i>presentation</i>) Let's act (<i>role play- conversation</i>) Let's play (<i>game-words</i>) Part3: Project (<i>group work-poster making</i>) Presentation (<i>group work-poster making</i>) A sample project (<i>group work-poster making</i>) Cultural link (<i>country</i>)	Recycle 1 Read and act (<i>conversation- classroom/class</i>) Sing and read (<i>alphabetic</i>) Read and say (<i>alphabetic</i>) Let's practise (<i>numbers</i>) Let's find out (<i>words</i>) Let's play (<i>game-revision- words</i>)

Both 'NV English' and 'PEP English' are designed as interactive books which include text and pictures. For example, in the section 'Just speak'; linguistic knowledge is presented alongside illustrations. In PEP English, at the beginning of each unit, there is a double-page of illustrations which forecast the main theme of the unit.



(Picture 5.1, NV English, G4-1-p2 (left); PEP English, G4-1-p2-3(right))

5.3 Framework of textbook analysis

In terms of the role of EFL textbooks as a vehicle for spreading ideological messages, Adamson's work on textbook analysis was referred to in Chapter Three. Therefore, firstly, the researcher analyzed the contents of both NV English and PEP English. It is identified that, there are some changes in these two volumes compared to their previous versions, especially in the delivery of political¹³, moral¹⁴ and cultural messages. (Table 5.2)

	Moral	Political	Cultural information	Chinese culture	Foreign culture	International communication
NV English	3.2%	0.3%	2.6%	0.8%	0.3%	1.5%
PEP English	4%	1%	6%	1.2%	3%	1.8%

No information regarding political attitudes or political role models appears in these two volumes of EFL textbooks. In terms of political messages, mainly there are only

¹³ In this analysis, political messages are messages that contain political ideology, political attitudes, and political role models; and messages that promote national identity and national pride.

¹⁴ Messages that promote expected behaviours are considered as cultural messages by the researcher.

signals to promote national identity and national pride. Moral messages are mainly expected behaviours at home, in schools and in public. In addition, these moral messages are delivered in a rather hidden manner. Compared to PEP English, some expected behaviours are made clear in the NV English. For example, in the 7th issue of NV English, the topic of unit 1 is about following rules at various levels; while ‘You should obey the rules’ is used as the title of this unit. On the other hand, messages regarding expected behaviours in PEP English tend to be presented through stories. For example, an issue of PEP English contains a story about returning lost property. This difference will be explained later in the chapter.

Both volumes of EFL textbooks contain a separate section about cultural knowledge. These cultural knowledge sections contain the introduction of both Chinese and foreign culture, such as food, costumes and places of interests. Several scenarios feature foreign children coming to study in China. International communication between children from different countries also appears in both NV and PEP English.

Here, mainly messages delivered through narratives of texts are considered, to ensure the result is comparable to Adamson (2004)’s research. However, it is noted that, there are more cultural messages hidden in illustrations, such as gestures, classroom settings and the way girls and boys are portrayed in pictures. Nodelman and Reimer (2002) noted that, in children’s literature, pictures not only make the reading material attractive, but also reflect cultural values. Child literacy is a source of social capital to be accessed. In further analysis of ‘NV English’ and ‘PEP English’, both text and pictures in textbooks were analysed, in terms of the cultural messages they may carry. A number of issues were focused on: narratives of texts and illustrations, the settings of illustrations, and the design of illustrations (Nodelman and Reimer, 2002). Indeed, a large amount of information is covered by illustration in both volumes. In a way, it is a presentation of cultural values in contemporary Chinese society.

As mentioned in Chapter Three, culture is defined as a set of shared understandings within a group of individuals. While values are common statements about right and

wrong and important and unimportant; cultural values are those standards shared by members of groups (Yang, Wang, and Drewry, 2006; Smith and Bond, 1998).

Scollon and Scollon (1995, p127) provide a framework of major cultural factors in intercultural communication. (Table 5.3)

1. Ideology: history and worldview, which includes:

(a) Beliefs, values, and religion

2. Face system: social organization, which includes:

(a) The concept of the self

(b) Kinship

(c) Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft

(d) Ingroup-outgroup relationship

Text and illustration concerning messages of these cultural factors can be identified in the NV English and PEP English. However, in the Chinese cultural context, these messages have further social connotations, resulting from a profound 21st century commitment to Confucianism. Confucianism emphasizes the importance of education in the moral development of the individual, so that the state is governed by moral virtue rather than by the use of coercive laws. Although the official ideology has been changed significantly, in some sense, Confucius provides the logical historical root of Chinese authorities' policies in modern society.

In practice, the themes in Confucian philosophy matured into the following forms: (Table 5.4)

Theme	Contents
Humanity	Refers to Confucius' consideration of an individual's development. It is considered the explanation for other themes including 'Filial piety'. Principles such as kindness, consideration, generosity and forgiveness are emphasized.
Ritual	Refers to the essential role of propriety or politeness in daily life.

	Traditionally, it is extended to the routines that Chinese people are engaged in, in the normal course of their lives.
Filial piety	<p>This is characterized as the respect and obedience that a child should show to his/her parents. It is also extended to the living, the dead and remote ancestors.</p> <p>‘Filial piety’ was officially challenged during the Cultural Revolution period. Children were encouraged to follow the ‘great communist ideology’ instead of their parents or seniors.</p>
Relationship (junior versus senior)	<p>This is a key element of Confucianism. It refers to the social duties that arise from one’s particular situation in relation to others. Each individual is involved in several power relationships with different people, such as students to teachers and juniors to seniors. On one hand, juniors are expected to respect their seniors. On the other hand, seniors are also expected in Confucianism to be kind and concerned about juniors.</p> <p>This relationship was extended by analogy to a series of five powerful relationships: ruler to minister, father to son, husband to wife, elder brother to younger brother, friend to friend. Each individual is expected to take particular duties in the relationships he/she may fit into. These five relationships were revoked after the end of the imperial period with the introduction of western liberty and democracy.</p>
Loyalty	<p>Originally, it was the equivalent of filial piety in a wider power relationship such as the ruler and the ruled, although the emphasis was placed more on the obligation of the ruled to the ruler.</p> <p>Also, it is extended to one’s duties to friends, family (nuclear and extended) and spouse.</p> <p>In modern China, the emphasis on loyalty is that of the individuals’ duties to the nation and states.</p>

Instilling individuals with moral principles has been emphasized by the government in Chinese history. As Confucius believed morals are a better tool to rule the state than laws. The spread of mainstream culture or officially approved moral standards has always been emphasised by the Chinese government in modern times. After 1949, the monolithic organization of the Communist Party of China and its unchallenged dominant communist ideology were to be the two pillars sustaining rule during Mao Zedong's era. These two pillars have been dismantled by a series of economic policies and political reforms under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping. The importance of economic development and cultural and ideological progress are now equally emphasised by authorities.

However, moral principles are always changing in step with social development. For example, what good behaviour refers to in the 21st century may be very different to the 19th century. Currently, Chinese citizens are encouraged to love the mother land, to serve the people, to uphold science, to work hard, to be united and help each other, to be honest and trustworthy, to be disciplined and law abiding, to know plain living and hard struggle (Hu, 2006). As mentioned in Chapter Two, the focus on moral education in China is 'patriotism, collectivism and the socialist ideal'.

Applying Scollon's cultural framework, the resulting understanding indicated that certain concepts were more crucial to this research, and others were less important. Firstly, the researcher targeted information concerning '*beliefs, value and religions*' in textbooks. Although no religious messages are found, it is believed that there are texts and illustrations which carry messages promoting 'expected behaviours and values'.

Secondly, messages carrying the '*concept of self*' in textbook data were located. For example, in the same textbook (PEP English, G3-1), there are 6 illustrations of children playing. In 4 pictures, boys are playing a ball game; while 2 pictures are portrayed as girls playing with dolls. A similar portrayal of gender stereotype is also revealed in the design of adult images. In the same book, adult images appear 4 times in home contexts; however, all of these 4 adults are designed as 'the mum' in family.

It is considered that, there is a tendency that a stereotyped gender role is portrayed in these textbooks. Besides of the presentation of social roles, messages with expected behaviours are also found. In textbooks, a child is portrayed as being a son/daughter, and a pupil in school. In the PEP English textbooks, there are 3 units describing children's home and what people may do at home. In 2 of them, there are messages encouraging children to take more responsibility at home and take care of themselves. Meanwhile, as being a pupil, in the PEP English textbooks, 6 units are based in a clear school/classroom context. Half of them cover messages concerning 'time management', which encourage children to use their time well and prioritise homework.

Thirdly, the researcher applied the concept of '*kinship*' in the textbook data. Text and images concerning the interactions between children and parents were targeted. There were strong messages of a harmony, but also gender stereotyped family relationships were revealed. For example, in PEP English Book G3-1, in a home context, adult images appear four times; while all these four adults were the mother in each scenario. In PEP English Book G3-2, the family scenario appears ten times, while mother's image appears in nine of them. Only illustration was portrayed as a father taking his daughter out to play. Those five scenarios where both parents appear show strong message of a harmony family relationship, through text and illustration (i.e. kinesics and proxemics of human images).

Fourthly, the researcher applied the cultural value of '*Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft*' in textbooks, and targeted various group scenarios (family, class/school, community etc). As noted earlier, in general, a harmonious group relationship was portrayed in textbooks. Meanwhile, there were strong messages to promote the concept of 'respect'. For example, in the PEP English Book G3-2, half of the 4 scenarios of pupil-teacher interaction carry the message of being polite to teacher and show your respect and appreciation to their work. In textbooks, messages concerning cultural values may be delivered through texts, narratives of stories and illustrations. It is noticed that, the idea of obeying rules in family, school and community were made relatively explosive in PEP English.

In addition, beyond family, class and school, the researcher also identified the concept of a nation as a group. As noted earlier, no information regarding political attitudes appear in the two volumes of EFL textbooks. However, the presentation of national identity reinforces national differences, as well as boundaries at a national level.

Through this initial analysis of EFL textbooks, the researcher refined Scollon and Scollon's 'major cultural factors'. Indeed, as seen in the following table (Table 5.5), these concepts are profoundly important in providing an understanding of a reading of textbooks. As listed below, they provide a 'heuristic device' to enable further in-depth textbook analysis.

Cultural values
<i>Confucian philosophy of education</i>
<i>Patriotism</i>
<i>Respect and Obedience</i>
<i>Diligence</i>
<i>Independence</i>
<i>Collectivism</i>
<i>Gender role</i>

(Table 5.4 Concepts from Confucius philosophy as refer to Scollon & Scollon's cultural framework)

5.4 Textbook analysis findings

Both NV English and PEP English present urban middle class characters throughout their texts and illustrations. Nearly all scenarios in the textbooks are designed in urban settings. Rural life is only mentioned in a few sections about 'Farm animals', 'Nature Park', and 'Grandparents are farmers'. For example, picture 5.2 is one of the

common household settings that appear in NV English. It represents an urban and rather comfortable lifestyle in China.



(Picture 5.2: NV English, G3-1-p74)

Besides, both volumes portray a typical urbanized lifestyle of a Chinese child. On weekdays, a child normally goes to school and goes home with homework. At weekends, this child may be engaged in different activities, including visiting grandparents, entertainments, sports, attending extra academic or art classes. During school holidays, the child may go travelling, either within the country or abroad, with parents.

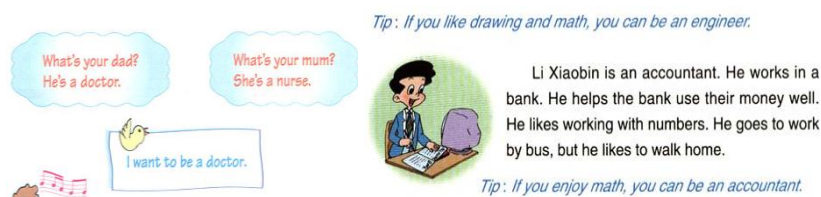
In addition, both volumes portray a middle class bias, presented mainly through career choice. Occupations such as teacher, doctor, nurse, TV reporter, vet, and banker are often used in textbook scenarios in preference to other jobs such as policeman, waiter and farmer. In both volumes, the scenario ‘My father is a doctor’ appears very often in sections about parents’ careers.

(Also see picture 5.34)



(Picture 5.3: PEP English, G4-1-73)

Families tend to be depicted with both parents in managerial and professional posts, such as doctor, teacher, engineer and accountant. Meanwhile, children are encouraged to take on middle class careers in the future.



(Picture 5.4, NV English, G5-1-P26 (left); PEP English, G6-1-p63 (right))

5.4.1 Confucian philosophy of education

There is no religious information delivered in either NV English or PEP English. These EFL textbooks are produced as the national textbooks for primary schools in China. As such, any religious information in textbooks is banned by the law and by educational policies in PRC.

In modern China, according to the Common Programme passed by the Chinese People's Consultative Conference in 1949, Chinese people are guaranteed freedom of religious beliefs. Therefore, the teaching or dissemination of organized religions in classrooms is forbidden.

Although there is no influence from any religion in these national textbooks, their design strongly reflects Confucian philosophy in many ways. Several examples of intention to promote these concepts can be found in these volumes of textbooks.

In family



(Picture 5.5 NV English, G3-2-p43 and G5-1-p45)



(Picture 5.6, PEP English, G3-2-p11)

These texts and illustrations give readers a sense that children are encouraged to love and openly express their love to their parents. It refers to one of the key themes in Confucianism – ‘filial piety’, which is strongly encouraged in today’s PRC.

In schools



(Picture 5.7: NV English, G3-1-p8)

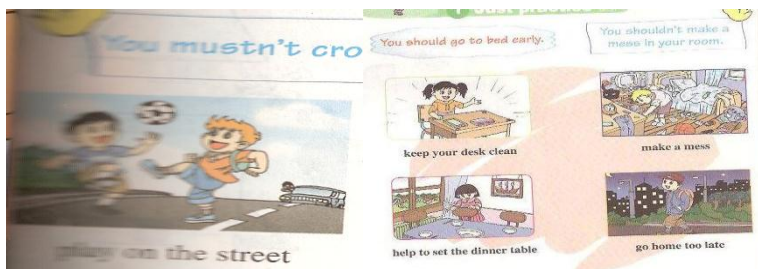
This picture shows a traditional greeting routine in a Chinese classroom. Pupils are required to stand up and say ‘Hello, teacher’ together when the teacher walks in before each class. The picture’s background shows a typical Chinese classroom with elements such as a blackboard and a teacher’s desk/stage with a box of white chalk on it. In the picture, the teacher is looking at the five pupils with a smile while the five children are all standing up straight; especially the girl in the green jacket (left 3) who has her hands behind her back. Having hands behind one’s back during a class was one of the traditional requirements for pupils in lower grades in primary school. Holding this posture shows the traditional expectation on a child to be respectful towards teachers or seniors. It is a situation that pupils may be familiar with. The picture successfully delivers the message to readers of how children are expected to or required to behave when greeting someone. Their facial expressions and standing positions imply the expected attitude of respect and good behaviour in student-teacher relationships.



(Picture 5.8: PEP English, G3-2-p8)

This example in PEP English portrays a scenario based in a classroom, mainly through speech. A student who is late for class is expected to apologize to the teacher before entering the classroom. The teacher then kindly allows her to come in with a smile on his face. It portrays a clear power relationship between the teacher and the student, in which students need to be polite and respect their teachers. Meanwhile, the teacher will treat the student with kindness in return.

In community



(Picture 5.9: NV English, G6-1-p6, G6-1-p9)

With a combination of pictures and texts, these sections clearly show the expected social behaviour of children in community. As for safety concerns, they are encouraged to go home early after school and not to play football on the street.



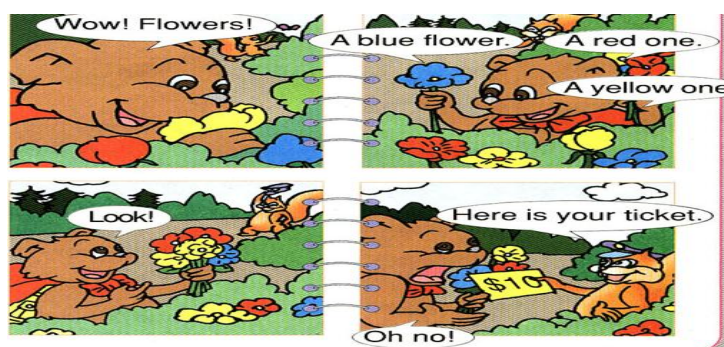
(Picture 5.10: NV English, G6-1-p10)

Picture 5.10 portrays the Chinese moral expectations of 'junior-senior relationships'. Children are encouraged to help seniors and to take care of younger children in the community.

Furthermore, some encouraged behaviours on environmental protection are also delivered through textbooks. Children are told not to litter and not to spit on the ground.



(Picture 5.11: NV English, G6-1-p9)



(Picture 5.12: PEP English, G3-1-p30)

In picture 5.11, children are told not to litter and to keep off the grass. In both picture 5.11 and picture 5.12, children are told not to pick flowers from the garden. Among these 'tips', Chinese children may not find 'keep off the grass' surprising. Children were encouraged to 'look at' flowers instead of to enjoy them by touch since the 1970s. Similar regulations were launched by some local departments of public service administration to protect the limited public grass areas in Chinese cities. However, this rule is introduced differently in these two volumes. The consequence of breaking a rule is shown to pupils, as the bear is given a '\$10 ticket' in picture 5.12.

As more pictures that demonstrate children's expected behaviours are included in 'NV English', this intent seems stronger in this volume. Also, when introducing these social moral principles, the 'punishment' as a consequence is mentioned in

‘PEP English’. Picture 5.12 portrays the influence of the western or modern ideology of legislation. Compared to ‘PEP English’, ‘NV English’ seems dominated by Confucian philosophy to a larger extent.

Overall, both volumes reflect the Confucian philosophy, which strongly emphasises the importance of moral training through education. In detail, moral training in EFL textbooks is found through the transmission of ‘patriotism’, ‘respect and obedience’, ‘diligence’, ‘independence’ and ‘collectivism’.

5.4.2 Patriotism

In both ‘NV English’ and ‘PEP English’, patriotism is promoted through the design of texts and illustrations which promote national identity and national pride. For national identity, images such as the ‘national flag’ and texts as ‘National Day’ are covered. Meanwhile, a sense of national pride is conveyed through the inclusion of some significant characters in Chinese culture, such as ‘contributions to human history’ and ‘sports’.

National identity



(Picture 5.13: NV English, G3-1-p2)

In ‘NV English’, the scene of a school gate is shown 11 times in Grades 3 and 4. However, the Chinese national flag is present in 5 of these 11 pictures. In ‘PEP English’, a school gate is shown 5 times in total; while the Chinese national flag is presented in 4 of these pictures. The National flag is considered the symbol of state. In China, raising the national flag and singing the national anthem is a weekly routine in most schools. The flagpole is always placed in front of the main building in schools. In this case, the textbook pictures depict the reality of Chinese primary schools. Also, it shows the educational policy regarding patriotism in primary schools. Children are required to recognise the importance of the national flag, show

respect to it and be loyal to the State. Surprisingly, the image of the national flag only appears in the textbooks of Grade 3 and Grade 4. This indicates that, in 'NV English', national identity is emphasized through the presentation of a national symbol (the flag) to younger children, while 'national identity' is taught to older children in different ways.

In 'PEP English', a connection is made between the image of the 'national flag' and the concept of 'nationality'.



(Picture 5.14: PEP English, G3-2-p4)

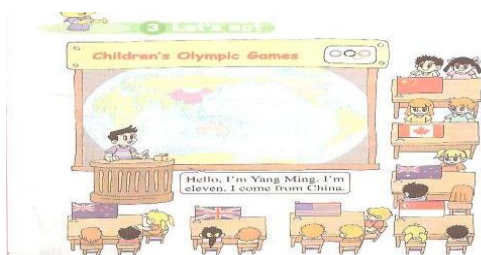
In addition, 'National Day' is also covered in PEP English to promote national identity.



(Picture 5.15: PEP English, G5-2-p31)

National pride

In both volumes, national symbols are also used to create a sense of 'national pride'. These symbols include 'sports' and 'contribution to human history'. In 'NV English', the Olympics are mentioned in the first book of Grade 5.



(Picture 5.16: NV English, G5-1-p4)

It is presented as the 'Children's Olympics' and the names of countries are taught. Holding the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing was considered a great honour for China and a source of pride for Chinese ethnic people. In the Grade 5 book, the term 'Olympic' is brought in to introduce nations instead of sports or PE. This implies that the 'Olympic Games' is an opportunity to win pride for the country beyond competing in sports.

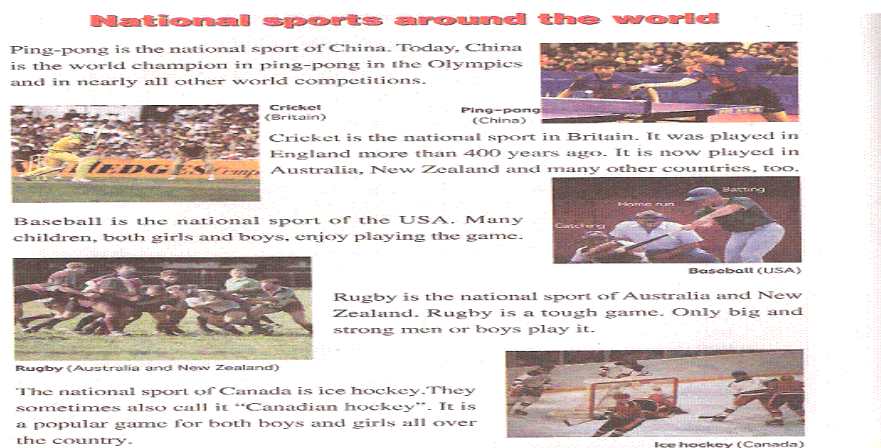
In PEP English, the message 'Chinese people invented paper' appears. This illustration implies pride in Chinese people's contribution to civilization.



(Picture 5.17: PEP English, G4-1-p25)

Papermaking is considered one of the 'Four Great Inventions of Ancient China'; alongside the compass, gunpowder and printing. They are seen as symbols of China's advanced science and technology, with a far-reaching global impact in the history of Chinese civilization.

Such an implication is reinforced by the text in the second book of Grade 5 – 'National sports around the world', in 'NV English'. Indeed, 'sports' has an additional meaning in China. More than just competition, it gives people a reason to be proud of their States.



(Picture 5.18: NV English, G5-2-p73)

Table tennis is called a 'national sport' by the media in China. China has the top international table tennis players and teams; the sport used to be extremely popular among Chinese people in the 1970s. Also, it was used as a political tool to create ties with the US in 1979. In a way, the use of the title 'National Sports' shows the Chinese editors' intention on promoting the concept of 'national pride'. However, the content of these sports presented may be argued. For example, football and rugby may be actually more popular than cricket in places of Britain. Here, the construction of cultural knowledge shows the Chinese editors'/writers' interpretation of foreign culture.

5.4.3 Respect and obedience

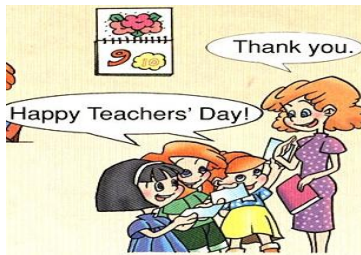
In Chinese tradition, Confucian kinship relationships are an extremely powerful force (Scollon and Scollon, 1995). They emphasize hierarchy and collectivistic relationships. First of all, ascending generations are considered prior to, and superior to, descending generations. This is evident in hierarchical relationships such as between parents and children. Also, kinship is extended to broader relationships such as those between teacher and students, seniors and juniors in schools or employees in companies. Although the requirements in obedience in the broader relationships are not as strict as those in hierarchical family relationships, appearing respectful is still essential. From the late 1910s, with the end of the last Chinese empire and the

influence of western democracy, the traditional hierarchy of kinship started to be challenged. For example, young people were encouraged to choose their own partners instead of agreeing to marriages arranged by their parents. The focus on civil obedience reached its peak in the Cultural Revolution of the 1970s, when children were encouraged to criticize their parents politically. Afterwards, kinship in modern mainland Chinese society rapidly shifted back to previous traditions. However, politely challenging parents or seniors in some contexts was more widely practiced, and respect towards seniors was encouraged.

Secondly, one is made aware of one's obligations and responsibility towards those who have come before as well as those who come after. From birth, an individual's life is largely carried out in the form of duty and obedience to his or her parents. Even though 'obedience' has been challenged, 'filial piety' and 'responsibility' to parents, especially in their old age, is compulsory. In modern society, taking care of elderly parents is required by the Family Law of the People's Republic of China as an obligation of adult sons and daughters.

Scollon and Scollon (1995) indicate two consequences of Confucian kinship in discourse. Individuals are involved in the practice of hierarchical relationships in discourse from a very early age, through learning how to show respect to those who are older and more powerful. Then, one learns the forms of guidance and leadership of those who come after. The second consequence is that one comes to expect all relationships, even those not based on kinship, to be hierarchical to some extent. Thus, in Chinese societies, respect is expected in various power relationships such as parents to children, teachers to students, and seniors to juniors.

In both 'NV English' and 'PEP English', respect to seniors (teachers, parents and elders) is strongly emphasised. Respect to teachers is revealed through the portrayal of good manners in the classroom (See Picture 5.7 and 5.8) and showing appreciation of the teachers' work.



(Picture 5.19: PEP English, G3-1-p11)

For example, as illustrated in picture 5.19, 'Teacher's Day' (10th September) is mentioned several times in both volumes. Students are encouraged to show their appreciation by making cards or giving flowers to their teachers. Meanwhile, 'PEP English' delivers a rather mixed message as it says that teachers and students 'are friends'.

Respect to older citizens is mentioned in textbooks. In both volumes, giving presents to parents on Mother's Day and Father's Day is encouraged. These special days came into PRC society in the late 1990s. In fact, they are not commonly celebrated in China at all. The emphasis on these two new holidays gives the reader a sense that children are encouraged to love and express their love to their parents. It may not necessarily be considered 'respect'. However, it can be seen as the first step in understanding the reasons and need to respect elders and develop respect as a social value.

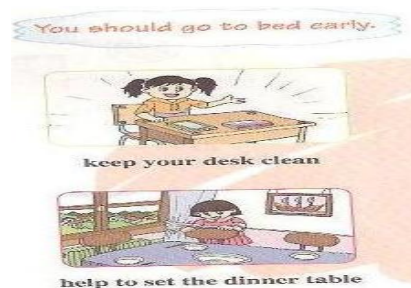
Compared to 'PEP English', 'respect to elders' is promoted in 'NV English' to a greater extent. In 'PEP English', 'grandparents and parents' birthdays' are designed as a topic for conversation in the Grade 5 student book. It implies the idea that children should remember these dates and express their love to these family members. On the other hand, respect to older citizens is made very clear in 'NV English'.

(Picture 5.20: NV English, G6-1-p9)



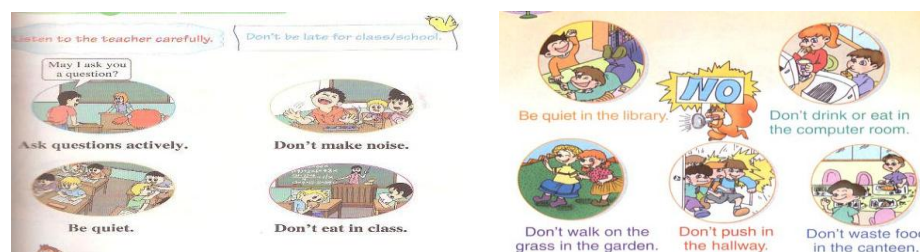
Before Grade 6, ‘respect’ and ‘filial piety’ are mostly transmitted through illustrations or scenarios in ‘NV English’. (See picture 5.5, NV English, G3-2-p43 and picture 5.6) However, these messages are emphasized strongly in the text of Grade 6 textbooks. For example, pupils are told directly to ‘respect old people and help them’ in the first textbook for Grade 6.

In both volumes, the concept of ‘obedience’ is presented in the sense of obeying rules in various places. Pupils are required to obey many rules at home, in schools or in communities. Rules in the form of ‘direct orders’ appear in both volumes. For example, family rules are covered by ‘NV English’.



(Picture 5.21: NV English, G6-1-p6)

Picture 5.22 shows the regulations which are expected to be followed by children in schools.



(Picture 5.22: NV English, G6-1-p3 (left); PEP English, G4-2-p12 (right))

Picture 5.23 shows some rules in a Chinese community.



(Picture 5.23: NV English, G6-1-p8 (left); PEP English, G6-1-p7 (right))

In 'PEP English', no family rules are particularly mentioned, although children are encouraged to share food with others. In addition, besides being delivered as 'direct orders', community rules are also illustrated through stories. To encourage children to obey these regulations, the consequence of breaking a rule is shown to children.



(Picture 5.24, PEP English, G6-1-p13)

Both the examples in picture 5.12 and picture 5.24 imply that, one must face punishment if he/she breaks a rule. To some extent, it also implies the author's understandings of 'obedience' in children's moral development.

5.4.4 Diligence

Diligence, which is always considered to be one of the most important values in Chinese culture, is not only encouraged in schools but among all Chinese ethnic people.

In 'NV English', diligence is shown in two aspects: life and the professional field. In book 4 (NV English, G4-2-p2), 'diligence' is transmitted through the delivery of a positive attitude to life and study. For example, pupils are taught 'early to bed, early

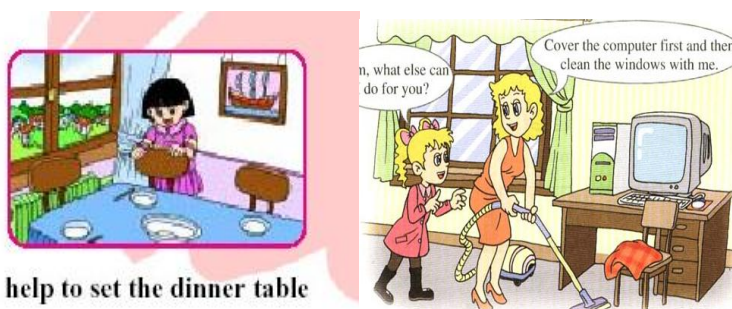
to rise’ and *‘put away school work before watching TV’*. As a role model, a hard-working scientist is presented in this volume. In addition, stories such as ‘Monkey missed his favourite class because he got up late’ also pass the information that ‘getting up early’ is essential. In ‘PEP English’, a similar story appears, as ‘The little boy got up late and missed his class.’

In ‘NV English’, some scenarios in the second unit of Grade 4 also encourage pupils to take extra art classes at the weekend by making it a common activity for Chinese children. The One Child Policy¹⁵ also makes ‘diligence’ much more important these days. The high expectations and pressures placed on children from their parents are plain to see. Again, as the ‘only hope’, a single child is expected to achieve more in order to make a return on the parents’ investment. Mostly, the anticipation of achievement is geared towards children’s academic performance in school. Parents with high expectations of their children, persuade them to take extra weekend classes in various subjects. ‘Quality education’ has been carried out in China for more than 15 years. It aims to reduce academic pressure on children and carry out education effectively and practically. After-school academic classes in public schools are strictly banned. However this does not stop parents sending their children to different kinds of after-school classes, weekend schools and vocational schools for academic or arts classes. Educators also suggest to parents that children’s play time is also essential in their development. In this case, the researcher was very surprised that children are in fact encouraged in the textbook to take on extra classes at weekends.

¹⁵ The One Child policy was firstly introduced in 1979 and soon incorporated into the 1980 Marriage Law which made ‘family planning’ an obligation of couples. The Chinese authorities believe that the implementation of population control policy was the only way to improve standards of living and economic development. Under the One Child policy, in most cases, one couple is only allowed to have one child. Families in some rural areas or those who fit in special categories (i.e. minority groups) can have more than one child. Consequently, this has shaped the new ‘4-2-1’ (four grandparents, two parents and one child) structure of Chinese families. Many families consist of four senior citizens (grandparents), an adult couple (parents) and one child. Indeed, China’s economy has improved rapidly in the past 30 years. It is hard to separate this success from the strict population control. However, the policy has come at a great social cost because the traditional beliefs and social practices placed great importance on the next generation especially on male children. Leaving aside human rights issues, the One Child policy has completely changed Chinese family structure.

5.4.5 Independence

In both volumes, pupils are encouraged to participate in domestic work. In ‘NV English’, this intention is shown by scenarios such as ‘help to set the dinner table’ and ‘children help mothers in housecleaning’.



(Picture 5.25: NV English, G6-1-p6, G4-1-p10)

The same intention appears in ‘PEP English’. Rather than acting as a little helper, the concept of ‘taking care of themselves’ is emphasised strongly. Children are encouraged to be engaged in housework and to be proud of being able to complete tasks independently.



(Picture 5.26, PEP English, G5-1-p45)

5.4.6 Collectivism

In Chinese culture, social members are not perceived as independently acting individuals. They are seen as acting within social groups (Scollon and Scollon, 1995). ‘Social harmony’ is considered the great goal of Confucianism. Before Confucius

introduced this into concepts of social philosophy, the idea of Harmony and Identity was developed along the natural viewpoint in the pre-Qin period in China. Zhou (515) indicated all matter consists of five elements which are different from each other: gold (jin), wood (mu), water (shui), fire (huo) and earth (tu). The fusion of various elements creates new matter, while repeating the same element will not change its character. Later, the idea of 'Harmony' was developed by Confucius and Mencius. Through long-term social practice, it is presented in all aspects of life, along the views of society, politics and ethnic moral principles.

The strategy of Harmony became an important characteristic of Chinese culture. Traditionally, Chinese people tend to deal with social relationships according to the harmonious strategy. In Confucian philosophy, five relationships are highlighted in traditional Chinese society: ruler and subject, parents and children, husband and wife, brothers and sisters, and friends. The individual is required to follow the rules set out for him/her in order to keep relationships balanced.

However, when the benefit of one group is in conflict with another, one is normally encouraged to put the needs of the larger group first. Therefore, in Chinese culture, 'individual welfare' is normally the last thing to be considered. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the group's benefit has been especially emphasised for fulfilling the needs of a socialist society.

Currently, 'the construction of the harmonious society' has become a strategic task for the Chinese people with the publication of the Resolution of the CPC Central Committee in 2006. It highlights the principles of building a harmonious socialist society according to eight aspects: coordinated development; social equality and justice; cultural harmony and the ideological and ethical foundations for social harmony; the need to improve public administration to build a vigorous and orderly society; and the strengthening of China's Communist Party's leadership.

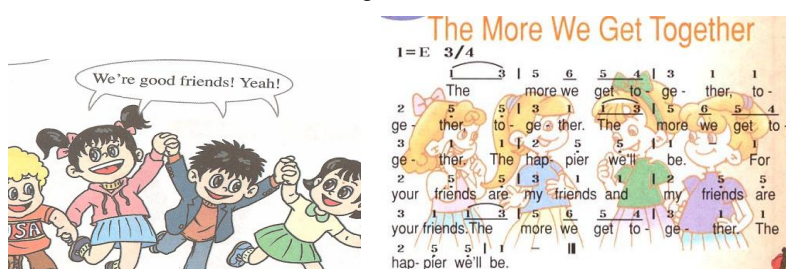
Group harmony is covered significantly throughout the volumes of textbooks; though the scale of the group may vary between grades.

In both volumes, a friendly harmonious relationship between family members is emphasised.



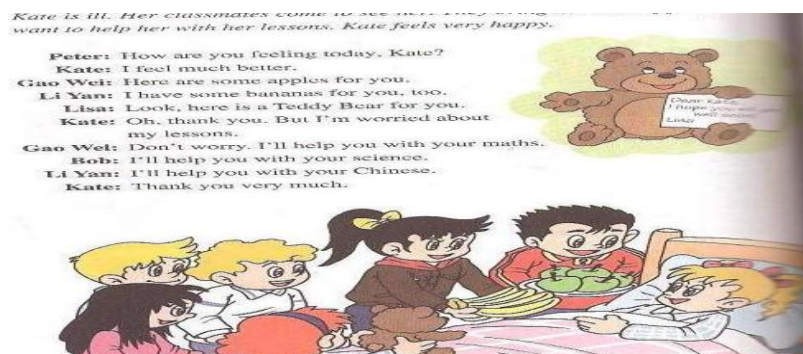
(Picture 5.27: NV English, G3-2-p31 (left); PEP English, G3-2-p13 (right))

Meanwhile, children are encouraged to make friends with each other.



(Picture 5.28: NV English, G4-1-p4 (left); PEP English, G3-2-p37 (right))

In 'NV English', children are also encouraged to be caring and to help their friends. For example, picture 5.29 illustrates a scenario where a group of children go and visit their friend who is ill. They bring her fruit and presents and offer to help her study.



(Picture 5.29: NV English, G5-2-p64)

In NV English, the concept of groups is enlarged to include the nation and the world. In both 'NV English' and 'PEP English', people from various countries are

represented by images of people with black, blonde or red hair and in modern western style clothes. Although it is hard to tell their ethnicity by their appearance, it is clear that people from China, Japan, Singapore and white people from western countries are represented in the written and visual discourse. In ‘NV English’, there are no photos of people with darker or black skin used in the books. Black ethnic groups are only shown a few times in the Grade 6 textbook through illustrations about global school lives.



(Picture 5.30: NV English, G6-2-p67)

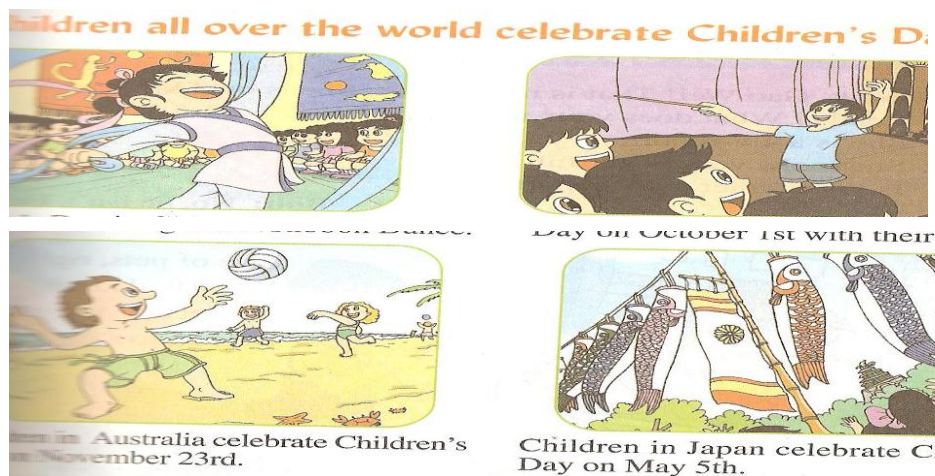
In ‘PEP English’, one black family are included as main characters in the textbook to represent people from the US.



(Picture 5.31: PEP English, G4-1-p68)

Compared to ‘NV English’, a more inclusive multiracial target culture is set in ‘PEP English’. The portrayal of various ethnic groups in textbooks shows the authors’ understanding of today’s multicultural world. It also indicates their intentions in framing the target culture.

However, what draw the reader’s attention are the fundamental reasons for forming a group. Traditionally, harmonious strategies are encouraged in order to deal with social relationships in Chinese culture. Logically, the foundation for building or keeping a group is the creation of shared views on certain points. However, it is clear that people live their lives differently all over the world. The textbooks give the reader a sense that the writer tried very hard to create the appearance of a harmonious world by searching for the shared points between various nations, although the information provided may be not factually correct.



(Picture 5.32: NV English, G5-1-p37)

Children's Day is the biggest festival for Chinese children. However, it is not celebrated in many countries. There are two errors in the picture. The date of Australia's Children's day is incorrect. Also, the celebration shown in Japan is actually for 'Boy's Day', as there are two separate children's days for boys and girls there. Again, the design of the section 'national sports', which is noted earlier in 5.3.2, in picture 5.18 provides another example of the Chinese editors'/writers' interpretation of foreign culture.

5.4.7 Gender roles

It is possible that Chinese people's gender-related attitudes and children's gender role formation are likely to be effected by a mixture of social and cultural features such as Confucianism, the Cultural Revolution and the One Child Policy.

As with many other societies, traditions in China dictate that men are viewed as superiors and so are portrayed as more important than women. According to Confucian values, a woman's role was as 'daughter, wife and mother' in her lifetime. Until the modern era in the 1900s, women were normally deprived of all rights and were present mainly to serve men in various relationships (father, husband and son). There were few distinct female leaders in Chinese history. Generally speaking,

women did not receive the same opportunities as their male siblings. Unmarried women were expected to stay in the home and train to be an acceptable future wife. Usually women were not allowed to engage in economic activities and policy making processes. An old Chinese proverb says: ‘women are someone with no intelligence but long hair’ (头发长见识短, nu re tou fa shang ,jian shi duan) and ‘uneducated women are more valuable’. (女子无才便是德, nu zi wu cai bian shi de) Mostly, women were expected to act as a housewife, obey the men in their lives and raise children. According to the former moral standard, they were asked to obey their fathers at home, and then obey their husbands after marriage. Even in widowhood they were told to obey their son or other male relatives at home. In Chinese tradition, children who have come of age have duties to assist or support their parents. However, daughters of the family were not relied on to make a living or to take care of their parents. They are traditionally married into their husband’s families and are expected to perform their major obligations by supporting their in-laws.

With the increasing prevalence of western thought in the 1900s, the role of Chinese women has gradually changed. In cities, women started to enjoy improved rights and more opportunities to receive education and engage in economic and political activities, although these changes have happened less rapidly in rural areas. In the PRC, a marriage registration system was established nationally in 1950 with the launch of the ‘New Democratic Marriage System’. Women are encouraged to engage in educational, economic and political activities by the government. Married women in China can now keep their own family name, ostensibly having equal domestic status, including ownership and household management rights with their husbands (Haney and Pollard, 2003).

However, the prevalence of ‘son preference’ still exists, especially in rural areas, where equal gender rights are less common (Haney and Pollard, 2003). Traditionally, in China, a male heir does not only continue the family name, most importantly; he is expected to provide for his parents in old age. In a way, the One Child Policy may strengthen Chinese parents’ gender expectations for their male children, especially in rural areas. The prevalence of ‘son preference’ in rural areas is deeply rooted due to

social welfare issues. Currently, most rural residents are not covered by the national social security system in China. Having a son who will support his family after his marriage is not just a cultural practice but essential to the lives of rural people. After the opening up of China's economy, the closing of state-owned industries increased the city dwellers' desire for male heirs, because of concerns about their economic futures.

On the other hand, the One Child Policy also has contributed to the improvement of gender equality, in terms of the provision of resources and opportunities provided by parents (Liu, 2006). This change may be more significant in urban areas, as a lot of rural families have more than one child. Tsui and Rich (2002) found that as opposed to the discrimination against girls among contemporary rural families with more than one child, the gender difference related to educational opportunities between single-girl and single-boy families in modern urban China. Their research indicated that equally high educational aspirations existed for both male and female only children.

Female enrolment in China's universities has increased dramatically since the late 1990s. In 1997, approximately 37.32% of all full-time university students were women. According to the statistics published by the Higher Education Department of China, women occupied 47.08% of all university places in China in 2005.

However, Mckeen & Bu's (2005) research showed that, once students enter the real world, women and men have different career experiences. Article 21 of the 'Law Safeguarding Women's Rights and Interests' requires that 'Women and men enjoy the same right to work', and 'except for certain work categories or positions that are unfit for women, no unit should refuse to employ women, or set a higher threshold for employing women on the sheer basis of gender'. However, equal opportunity to compete with males in the labour market does not necessarily mean females occupy an equal position. Women still have less power than men in other fields. In China, men still tend to be the masters of the house and the money makers in the family. Besides working full-time, urban women are expected to take more responsibilities than their male partners in housework and taking care of children and elders. Equally

qualified and committed women fail to rise as high or as fast as men in companies and organizations. The ‘glass ceiling’ phenomenon also exists in China. In the PRC, women have enjoyed greater economic and political opportunities since Deng Xiaoping’s era than ever before. However, they are still drastically underrepresented in positions of authority in both government organizations and business (Leung, 2002). Researchers found that Chinese women only earn about 60% of the average male income. An extreme example of this exists in the education system (Maurer-Fazio et. al, 1999). Currently, more than 90% of primary school teachers are female. However, it is widely recognized that male primary school teachers are more likely to be promoted into management positions.

Children’s gender identity in textbooks

A rather stereotyped gender identity is shown in ‘NV English’ and ‘PEP English’, especially in the former textbook.

In ‘NV English’, most of the animal images used are human-like. Some of them are given characters. Two main ones are a monkey (Micky) and a cat (Mini).



(Picture 5.33: P3-1-p8)

As the picture shows, the monkey’s clothes make readers feel that ‘this is a boy’ while Mini the cat is in a girl’s blue dress. Images of the cat and monkey are always presented in pages as the heading in the whole volume of textbooks. Also, they are the main characters in the ‘Fun story’ which is presented at the end of every three units. If we take a second look at this heading, the boy-like monkey is shown as active while the girl-like cat is standing still with a cute facial expression. Throughout this volume, there are stories with Micky and Mini as the main characters. Readers are given the impression that Micky is always the tricky or naughty one. In comparison, Mini is more ‘well-behaved’ which reveals adult expectations of female and male children’s behaviour.

Pupils are taught how to describe physical appearance. Words like ‘beautiful’ and ‘pretty’ are used quite often especially in discourse regarding females. For example, in NV English, these sentences appear:

‘She is ten. She is a pretty girl.....’;

‘This is Marie Curie.....She’s pretty.’

‘I love my mother best. She is kind and beautiful.’

(NV English, G5-1-p8, p36, p44)

In PEP English, a conversation between two children is designed as:

‘Amy: Who’s she?’

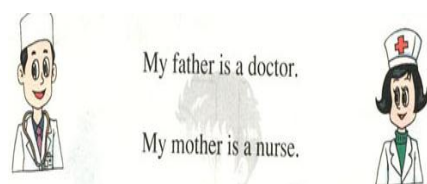
Wu: She is my aunt.

Amy: Wow! She’s really beautiful....’ (PEP English, G6-1-p60)

Taken literally, it is a compliment which shows politeness. It can also be considered to emphasise one social expectation of females —‘being pretty’. When males are involved in the textbooks, the focus of descriptions change to ability or personality. Words like ‘smart’ and ‘funny’ are more often used to describe boys in the textbooks.

Adults’ gender in careers

For adults, certain gender trends in careers are more obvious. Occupations such as driver, teacher, farmer, doctor, nurse and postman are presented with images of different genders. However, when the males and females appear in discourse as husband and wife, the male always tends to have a job with a higher social status than his wife. This portrays the traditional Chinese notion that the male is the bread winner or head of the family. Also, this viewpoint is present in both volumes.



(Picture 5.34: NV English, G4-1-p11)

Parenthood: Mum, always mum

In both volumes, many scenarios involve conversations between parent and child. The researcher found that 90% of these communications happen between the mother and the child. It seems as though it is only the mother who takes care of the children, stays at home, welcomes children's friends, takes children shopping etc.

Also, if the conversation happens at home, mothers tend to be depicted as the 'housekeeper'. Mothers wear aprons, casual dresses and slippers. They feed children and their friends, clean the house, and do laundry and shopping. They may not work outside the house because they can be found in a 'home scenario' during the day.



(Picture 5.35: NV English, G4-1-p50, G4-2-p10, G4-2-p20, G4-2-p9; PEP English, G3-2-p50 (bottom right))

At the same time, fathers are generally absent while mothers are interacting with children at home. In textbooks, fathers are generally portrayed as follows: they wear a suit and carry a briefcase; they come home late; if staying at home, they watch TV, read the newspaper or simply sit on the sofa.



(Picture 5.36: NV English, G4-1-p48, G4-1-p22 (left and middle); PEP English, G4-2-p37 (right))

As distinct from the portrayed role of females as housekeepers and nurturers, fathers are presented as the money maker of the family with a professional or white-collar image.

The father does attend important occasions such as his daughter's birthday party or the family trip in the textbooks. Also, fathers may only help mothers with housework if they get permission.



(Picture 5.37: NV English, G4-2-p10)

In 'PEP English', an attempt to portray a different gender role is found. In picture 5.38, the father struggles to take care of the child when the mother is engaged in an emergency.

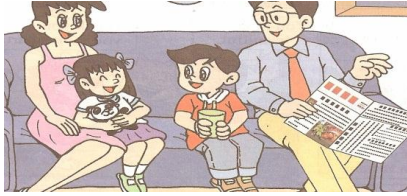


Monkey: Mom isn't at home. I can help you, Dad.
Dad: Sure. You're a big boy now.

(Picture 5.38: PEP English, G5-1-p80)

These portrayals imply gender roles found in family and society, as females are expected to take more responsibility for housework than their opposite sex partners. Similarly, females are more likely to be in charge of house cleaning and childcare. In the later issues of both volumes, males may be expected to take more responsibilities. This implies a shift in the traditional male role to a new one as both money maker and child carer.

Meanwhile, the pictures in the textbooks portray girls as physically closer to their mothers than boys.



(picture 5.39: NV English, G5-1-p22)

Generally speaking, fathers leave childcare responsibilities to mothers in China. It is not surprising that daughters have a closer relationship with their mother than with their father. At the same time, research shows that ‘fathers tend to spend more time with their sons than with their daughters’ (Neilson, 2006). This picture shows the mother-daughter and father-son relationship through the places they occupy on the sofa.

5.5 Conclusion

These interesting portrayals in EFL textbooks draw attention to cultural values. In general, the design of 'NV English' and 'PEP English' depict urban and middle class lifestyles. In particular, a series of cultural values are transmitted through both texts and illustrations, such as the Confucian philosophy of education, patriotism, respect and obedience, diligence, collectivism and gender role. In addition, as noted earlier in this chapter, a few errors regarding international culture can be found. It shows that, there is a tendency for foreign culture to be locally interpreted in EFL textbooks.

Based on these textbook analysis findings, this research explores the process of curriculum and textbook design, with a focus on how these cultural values are transmitted through EFL textbooks in Chinese Primary Education. The next chapter will present the findings constructed from data collected through interviews and focus group discussions.

Chapter Six: Field Work Findings

6.1 Introduction

In 2001, the State Council of China drafted a new curriculum for the EFL subject during the nine-year compulsory education period from primary school to secondary school. As part of the curriculum reformation, a series of textbooks were produced by different agencies. Most of these books are designed with the co-operation of Chinese and foreign educational agencies.

In this 2001 EFL curriculum, the improvement of students' intercultural communicative competence was emphasised. Thus, curriculum designers increased the amount of material relating to this target and the local culture in English language learning. Textbooks, as the primary carrier of school knowledge, are required to take the responsibility of both knowledge delivery and cultural introduction. As a consequence, more cultural elements were added into these newly designed English textbooks.

This research aims to look at, how cultural values are transmitted through national EFL textbooks in Chinese primary schools. In Chapter Five, the researcher selected two volumes of EFL textbooks ('NV English' and 'PEP English') as samples and analysed the delivery of cultural values in them. The findings show that a number of cultural values are portrayed in these publications, such as the Confucian philosophy of education, patriotism, respect and obedience, diligence, independence, collectivism and gender roles. These textbooks also show a strong urban and middle class bias in content.

Based on these initial findings, the researcher interviewed a series of participants involved in national curriculum design and textbook development in China, such as

an educational administrator in the Ministry of Education (MoE), curriculum designers, textbook editors/writers and classroom teachers.

In this chapter, the research findings are analyzed with respect to four key areas relating to the process of curriculum and textbook development for the EFL subject in Chinese Primary Education: cultural value transmission in textbooks; the relation between national curriculum and textbooks; production of school knowledge and cultural reproduction; and cultural value transmission in the era of cultural globalization.

The first section discussed the transmission of cultural values found in the initial textbook analysis from the perspective of textbook design. The principles of Confucian philosophy are followed in the current Chinese educational system. Thus, alongside knowledge delivery, Moral Education is highly emphasised and required in all school subjects. Different editors/writers may have their own interpretations of moral criteria. In general, aspects such as patriotism, respect and obedience, independence and collectivism, are more or less intentionally delivered through textbook design. Meanwhile, a diligent attitude, stereotypical gender roles and an urban/ middle class bias, were unconsciously portrayed in textbooks.

Secondly, this chapter discusses the relationship between the national curriculum and textbooks in Chinese Primary Education. The national curriculum is closely followed in textbook design. However, due to the lack of detailed guidelines, the design of textbook content, especially selection of cultural knowledge and the portrayal of cultural values, are left to the discretion of editors/writers.

The third section discusses the production of school knowledge and cultural reproduction in the EFL subject in Chinese Primary Education. Policy making follows a top-down approach in China's centralised educational system. Despite gaps in educational provision due to social and economic development, policy changes tend to be implemented on a nationwide scale. This, in a way, contributes to the aggravation of unequal regional development in China. In the case of the EFL

subject, curriculum designers and textbook editors/writers, as representatives of intellectuals, are the real practitioners of knowledge production and cultural reproduction. In theory, policy making is under strict state control; however, these curriculum designers and textbook editors/writers have a degree of autonomy and their 'common sense' plays an essential part in cultural reproduction.

Finally, cultural value transmission, as an important part of cultural reproduction, is also discussed from the perspective of cultural globalisation. There is a strong need to bring foreign culture into the EFL classroom. However, there are two restrictions to such cultural interchange: obvious official social control over ideology, value and culture; and the hidden challenge of local tradition and social culture. In China, the former restriction is implemented through state control of the media and publishing. The latter is realized through the use of editors/writers' 'common sense' in the interpretation of foreign culture in English textbooks.

6.2 Cultural value transmission

In Chapter Three, the researcher analysed two volumes of EFL textbooks, New Version of Primary English (NV English) and PEP primary English (PEP English), which are used by a large percentage of students in primary schools in China. Guided by Scollon's (1995) cultural value framework, this analysis focused on the delivery of cultural values in both text and illustrations.

The result shows that cultural values, known as Confucian philosophy of education, which include patriotism, respect, obedience, diligence, independence, collectivism and gender role, are covered by these textbooks in different ways.

During the fieldwork, a series of questions were raised regarding the delivery of these cultural values in the process of textbook design. It was found that some of these cultural values, such as Confucian philosophy of education, patriotism, respect, obedience and collectivism are intentionally delivered as a part of the textbook

design. Meanwhile other values were largely neglected but were included unconsciously in the textbooks by editors/writers.

6.2.1 Confucian philosophy of education

Confucian philosophy of education emphasises the importance of teaching children to be good citizens. It is a philosophy followed in Chinese education throughout the processes of educational policy making, curriculum design and textbook development.

In China, the development of moral standards is a high priority in education and all subjects promote Moral Education in the school curriculum.

At the Second National Conference on Education Work, Mr Jiang Zemin (1994)¹⁶ stated the importance of education:

“[to improve the nation’s redevelopment] the most vital point is, we must recognize that, economic growth relies on the development of science and technology and the improvement of the quality of labour. We must make Education our strategic priority for China’s development, and we must work on the improvement of the moral [ideological] and educational [scientific and cultural] level of the whole nation.”

Confucianism, which works as a principle philosophy in Chinese education, emphasizes the importance of the teaching and learning of moral principles. It can be found in the curriculum policy, as well as textbooks. The 2001 EFL curriculum aims to: “... further broaden [students’] international worldview; to enhance patriotism and national responsibility; to develop healthy emotion, attitude and value; to build a solid foundation for future development and life long learning.”

Interviewee No.9 said:

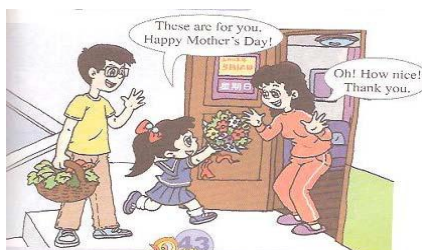
¹⁶ Jiang Zemin served as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of China from 1989 to 2002, as President of People’s Republic of China from 1993 to 2003, and as Chairman of the Central Military Commission from 1989 to 2004.

“Moral Education is not directly mentioned in the 2003 EFL Curriculum, however, it mentioned the task of ‘how to help students to develop positive emotional attitude... There is a chapter in the EFL curriculum guiding the textbook design. It also emphasizes the importance of including Moral Education in EFL classes.”

This emphasis on Moral Education in schooling is also reflected in the development of national textbooks. According to interviewee No.21,

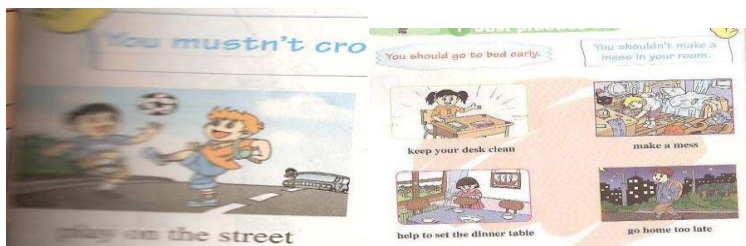
“Confucian philosophy on education is considered as an assumption in the design of EFL textbooks.”

To promote Moral Education, EFL textbooks use a combination of text and illustration to teach expected social behaviour for children alongside English language knowledge. These expected behaviours are socially constructed and reflect the cultural values of a certain society.



(Picture 6.1, NV English, G3-2-p43)

For example, in picture 6.1, children are encouraged to love, and openly express their love, for their parents. This is one of the key themes of Confucianism- ‘filial piety’, which is also encouraged in today’s People’s Republic of China.



(Picture 6.2 NV English, G6-1-p6, and G6-1-p9)

The information includes Chinese moral expectations on filial piety and junior–senior relationships. Children are encouraged to help parents set the dinner table at home, to help seniors and to take care of younger children in the community. Also, expectations of children’s individual behaviour are highlighted in the textbooks. Children are encouraged to develop good habits in keeping desks and rooms clean. As for safety concerns, they are encouraged to go home early after school and not to play football in the street. Furthermore, some encouraged behaviours on environmental protection, are also delivered through textbooks. Children are told to not to litter or spit on the ground.

Expected social behaviours reflect social values. They are shaped by culture. For example, considering the suggestions above, Chinese children would not be surprised by a ‘keep off the grass’ sign. Children have been encouraged to look at flowers instead of touching them since the 1970s. Similar regulations were launched by some local departments of public service administration, to protect the limited public grass areas in Chinese cities.

In EFL textbooks, the expected behaviour of good citizens is presented in different ways. The textbook analysis in Chapter Five concluded that the intention of Moral Education seems stronger in the ‘NV English’, as it includes more pictures of children’s expected social behaviours. Conversely, when introducing these social moral principles, ‘PEP English’ invokes the concept of ‘punishment’ as a consequence for bad behaviour. This shows the influence of the western or modern ideology of legislation. Compared to ‘PEP English’, ‘NV English’ seems more dominated by Confucian philosophy.

Fieldwork data shows that, to some extent, such differences are due to the different backgrounds of chief editors and design teams.

Interviewee No.17 said that:

“Compared to other volumes, our (PEP English) textbooks are a bit different because our chief editor always emphasises citizenship education in EFL subject.... Our chief editor is kind of a western gentleman. He paid a lot of attention to manners and behaviours. So he insisted that this volume of textbooks (PEP English) must contain information about manners in order to teach pupils how to behave in school and in the community, such as ‘do not push each other in the hallway’ or to express appreciation when receiving a gift..... at least when children turn to this page, this information will give them an impression of what good manners are.”

In Chapter Five, the findings of textbook analysis also showed that, although they are delivered in different ways, a few expected social behaviours are covered in both volumes of textbooks. These are: patriotism, respect and obedience, diligence, independence and collectivism. There is also the hidden theme of gender roles transmitted through the textbooks.

Patriotism

The delivery of patriotism is included in all subjects in Chinese Basic Education. Interviewee No.1 mentioned this:

“All school subjects take this responsibility, which is the delivery of both knowledge and Moral Education; there is no exception for the EFL subject. For example, it is necessary to deliver Moral Education alongside language knowledge teaching. It [cultural transmission] does not only mean the recognition of foreign culture, it can also be used to lead students to love their home country more.... Teachers are required to encourage children to be loyal to their homeland, while foreign cultures are introduced in the classroom.”

Regarding the delivery of ‘patriotism’ in textbook design, interviewee No.17 said that:

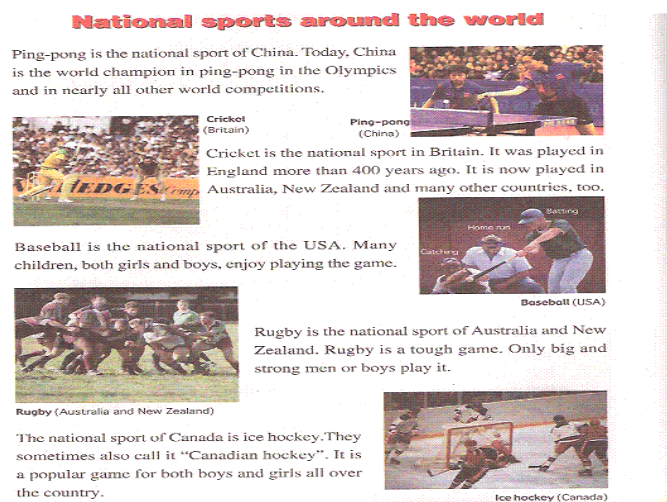
“...We did mention the Chinese national flag in this volume of textbooks, although there is no specific unit to encourage children to love China. Also, it is a bit hard to define patriotism.... I am not sure what children at such a young age [primary school] can do to express their loyalty or love the country. I feel ‘patriotism’ is such a theoretical term to young children. What is important is that children know how to behave, how to study, how to live and how to obey social rules in order to be a good citizen. To be a good citizen is actually a way to express your love for the country.”

According to interviewee No.17, ‘patriotism’ is transmitted through both ‘NV English’ and ‘PEP English’ in a rather hidden way. In both volumes, images and texts are found, which signify national pride and promote patriotism. For example, the ‘national flag’ appears in most pictures of school playgrounds. The National flag is considered the symbol of the State. In China, raising the national flag and singing the national anthem is a weekly routine in most schools. The flagpole is always placed in front of the main school building. In this respect, the textbook pictures illustrate the reality of Chinese primary schools. Also, it shows the educational policy regarding patriotism in primary schools. Children are required to recognize the importance behind the national flag, show respect to it and be loyal to the State.



(Picture 6.3, NV English, G3-1-p2)

A section about ‘national sports’ is included in the second book of Grade 5 in the ‘NV English’.



(Picture 6.4 NV English, G5-2-p73)

Table tennis, cricket, baseball, rugby and ice hockey are used to present the national sports of China, Britain, United States, New Zealand and Canada. Regardless of whether or not these sports are the most popular sports in these countries, the use of the term 'National Sports' deserves consideration. It shows that 'sports' has an additional meaning in contemporary culture. More than just competition itself, it is a source of national pride. The creation of the section 'national pride' shows the authors' intention to promote 'patriotism' in textbooks through sports.

Respect and obedience

In the EFL textbooks, the portrayal of a teacher-student relationship delivers a mixed message. In traditional Chinese culture, teachers are honoured and treated with a very high level of respect and reverence. For many years, effort has been put into promoting a change from teacher-centred pedagogy, to a student centred teaching and learning approach. At the same time, Chinese educators have realised the importance of developing students' critical thinking skills and creativity. Today, educators in China are encouraged to build a more equal teacher-student relationship, in order to encourage children to be more confident in critical thinking.

Even so, the intention of encouraging pupils to be respectful is made very clear in textbook design. Interviewee No.17 said that:

“... there is a section about ‘showing respect to teachers’. In terms of family, we were delivering a message of ‘I love you, you love me, and we are a happy family’. “

Similarly to ‘respect’, the delivery of ‘obedience’, which refers to ‘obey school rules and social rules’, is also intentionally planned by editors/writers in textbook design. It tends to be mentioned in the upper grades, since pupils are expected to have a sense of community at that stage. Interviewee No.16 mentioned:

“...our chief editor believes that, it is necessary the emphasis ‘obeying rules’ in textbooks, as we should teach children how to be a socialized person... in a way, it is perceived (by the chief editor) as a part of ‘life skills’, which is pursued by the EFL curriculum’ through the section of ‘affect and attitude’.”

As described in Chapter Three, 2001 EFL curriculum emphasised five dimensions in English language teaching and learning: language skills, language knowledge, affect and attitude, learning strategies and cultural awareness. The section of ‘affect and attitude’ aims to develop students’ motivation, worldview and spirit; in other words, this focus of this dimension is the socialization of students. The field work findings show that, learning to obey social rules, is considered by editors/writers as a necessary aspect of students’ socialization.

Diligence

Diligence refers to studying hard and working hard. The field work findings show that the promotion of diligence was not included in the plan of textbook design. As interviewee No.17 explained, a positive picture of life is portrayed in textbooks, where only well-behaved children with good academic performance, are presented. Thus, it would not be necessary to also encourage children to work hard, according to the editors/writers. However, as noted in Chapter Five, the cultural value of

diligence was unconsciously transmitted in textbooks. For example, in both volumes, narratives of ‘priorities school work over entertainments’ were found. In ‘NV English’, a scientist who works long hours in an office was positively presented as a successful and respectful role model.

Independence

In textbooks, Chinese children, who tend to be only children in their families, are encouraged to be independent in daily life, with regard to taking care of themselves and helping parents. Interviewee No. 17 said that:

“...there was a study about how much time children spend on housework. It turned out that Chinese children only spend 8 minutes on housework everyday while children from other countries spend much more time on it. So we designed a unit about housework in PEP English to encourage children to be more engaged in housework.”

This intention also measures up to the criteria of Moral Education in Basic Education as students are always encouraged to be more engaged in activities such as classroom cleaning.

Collectivism

As noted in Chapter Five, collectivism, presented mainly as ‘group harmony’ is significantly shown in textbooks. It is promoted through the portrayal of a harmonious relationship in family, school, community and the world.

Guided by the national curriculum, collectivism is promoted as a key concept in the textbooks by editors/writers. However, the delivery of ‘group harmony’ was not planned. The concept of ‘collectivism’ was interpreted differently by editors/writers. It was intentionally transmitted through the design of group activities. In addition, editors/writers from different institutions may not share the same understanding. Chinese editors/writers tend to use the concept of ‘team work’ rather than

‘collectivism’, since the latter may refer to ‘conformity’ due to the influence of the Culture Revolution. A Canadian editor mentioned the delivery of ‘collaboration and collators of learning’ as they can promote tolerance and respect.

6.2.2 Gender roles

No clear standards regarding expected gender behaviour are applied in textbook design. Although there are always debates about how gender roles should be presented to children, efforts were made to balance gender behaviours in textbooks. Interviewee No.17 mentioned:

“... I don’t think we consciously emphasized the social gender role in textbooks. It is just ‘common sense’ I suppose. It is like an invisible standard. It does not only include behaviour, there is always a kind of social perspective on suitable job in terms of gender. When we were teaching the word ‘policeman’, yes, it tended to be a man. But we did try to balance this issue, for example we added in ‘firewoman’ after introducing the word ‘fireman’.

... it is not avoidable since it reveals the social reality in today’s China. I think it is okay to accept ‘common sense’. But we also consciously added scenarios like ‘father cooks at home’ into textbooks in order to ensure a balance in terms of gender role.”

It is considered that, editors/writers are fully aware of the need for balanced gender roles. However, most of them believe that ‘common sense’ should be followed in order to maintain a similarity between textbooks and children’s lives.

Interviewee No16 responded to this as a ‘stereotype’:

“... normally, if we intentionally to design something in the textbook, there must be an aim for it, for example, we wanted to guide children in a certain way. Female was definitely not intentionally portrayed as ‘mum or house worker’; the gender issue was kind of ignored; the editors/writers didn’t think it was important.”

6.2.3 Middle class and urban trends in textbooks

Middle class and urban trends and preferences appear in both volumes of textbooks, through texts and illustration.

As noted in Chapter Five, the middle class trends in career choice are rather obvious. Middle class professions (i.e. doctor and teacher) were used in preference to lower class jobs (waiter and farmer). Meanwhile, most of the scenarios in textbooks depict urban daily lives.

Children in rural and especially less economically developed areas may find these portrayed lifestyles very unfamiliar. Interviewees were aware of that, contemporary EFL textbooks have been criticised for showing an ‘urban trend’. However, it seemed difficult for most of them to give a clear response to this question. A few interviewees (No.10, No.16 and No.17) have mentioned their concerns about the use of these textbooks in rural or less economically developed areas. Interviewee No.16 said that:

“A teacher from a rural school complained that, the textbook knowledge is too distanced from his/her students’ daily lives. For example, a textbook contains this word ‘popcorn’, but his/her students have never seen popcorn in their lives, he/she found it very difficult to explain it to them.”

This is supported by the supplementary data gathered through the interviews with classroom teachers. On the other hand, an urban teacher would not experience this problem. To urban children, ‘popcorn’ and many other elements in daily life portrayed in textbooks are rather familiar. Students in economically developed areas have a lot more opportunity to access up-to-date information about the modern world. For example, images of ‘hamburgers’ and ‘fast food restaurants’ were frequently used in the chapters about ‘food and healthy diet’, in ‘NV English’. As a consequence of globalization, these western cultural products were adopted by Chinese people and became part of popular culture in China. However, there is an

obvious gap between the adoption of these western influences in urban and rural China. It is easier for urban children to consume these products compared to their peers in rural or less developed areas. To gain a better understanding of this middle class and urban trend of textbook knowledge, it is necessary to discuss the process of curriculum and textbook design in China.

6.3 Textbooks: their relation to the curriculum

6.3.1 Curriculum design

In 1999, the State Council launched a document¹⁷ regarding the further promotion of essential-qualities-oriented education (EQO) after a national educational conference. In order to design a new EFL curriculum, the Division of Curriculum Development (DCD)¹⁸ and National Centre of Curriculum and Textbook Development (NCCT) invited about 100 educational experts from educational institutions to set up a team (Interviewee No.3). The first draft of the EFL curriculum was quickly completed and published in 2001. The task of writing this document was divided into several sections. A few experts were involved in the writing of each part. Different expressions regarding cross-cultural awareness were used in this document. The issue of these different expressions was a question raised in a few interviews. Interviewee No.8 replied as this:

“... in terms of the use of different expressions, unreservedly, it is a clerical error. Due to time constraints, maybe the consistency of expressions in this document was not paid enough attention to. In the writing of the second draft [more than 5 years after the publication of draft one], we finally got chance to revise it through, so the quality considering expression use will be better this time...”

¹⁷ This document provided a timeframe for building up a new curriculum system. Rather than a ministerial action, the publication of this document marked the start of a national curriculum reformation which is financially supported by the Ministry of Finance.

¹⁸ In China, the Ministry of Education (MoE) is responsible for national educational undertakings. The MoE and the National Centre of Curriculum and Textbook Development (NCCT) have responsibility for the development of the national curriculum is taken charge of by. It is a government agency which was founded in 1999 to assist the Division of Curriculum Development (DCD) in reforming the national curriculum. Both the DCD and NCCT act as organizer and administrator in the process of curriculum development of all subjects in Basic Education. There are four members of staff in the DCD while the NCCT has about eighteen staff.

It is considered that, the design of 2001 EFL curriculum was completed in a rather tight time frame. Regarding the detailed terms used in this document, I also asked interviewees to clarify a few terms regarding cultural issues. For example, the 2001 English curriculum states that pupils should be aware of the ‘most important English-speaking countries’. According to most interviewees (curriculum designers), this document acts as a structural standard, which means, to define ‘most important English-speaking countries’ and provide a possible list, a content standard is expected. This led to two questions – “who will design such a ‘content standard’ for schools or teachers to use in practice?” And “who is eligible to design it?” Interview No.8 mentioned that:

“... it supposed to be like this: there is a national curriculum framework, and each province is given freedom to design their content standard, and each school has their own practical syllabus...”

He claimed that, local educational authorities in China are not capable of doing so due to a lack of human resources. Thus, to some extent, this task was handed to textbook designers.

As a policy, curriculum was implemented through in-service teacher training. The MoE organized a few national trainings. A number of senior teachers from different areas attended these trainings. They were required to share training experiences with their colleagues afterwards. Also, provisional or regional teacher training activities were carried out. Interviewee No.9 said:

“... the implementation of the curriculum is organized by the MoE. In the initial stage of this curriculum reform, we were invited as curriculum designers by local educational authorities to give lectures and make sure teachers were new curriculum trained.”

The promotion of the new curriculum also went along with the promotion of textbooks. Interviewee No.8 said:

“... to meet the criteria of the new curriculum, new textbooks were produced. The MoE took this as a great opportunity. Thus, publishers were encouraged to promote the new English curriculum during their textbook training activities for classroom teachers.”

So, in textbook training workshops which are organized by publishers, interpretations of current curriculum policy will normally be carried out. In a way, this may save the cost of policy implementation. However, this may also result in the ‘misinterpretation of curriculum’.

6.3.2 Textbook production

As addressed earlier, owing to the lack of human resources, local educational authorities in China are not able to design a syllabus which is suitable for local educational and socio-economic needs. In fact, this task was handed over to the textbook editors/writers who struggled to meet the requirements for different areas. Interviewee No.17 said:

*“It is not recommended by the MoE to design textbooks for a specific group of users. We aim to design a textbook which can meet the requirements of as many groups as possible to maintain equality in educational provision ...of course some versions might be more suitable than others to a certain area. It is left to local divisional educational authorities to choose suitable books from a given list of national textbooks.”*¹⁹

Indeed, each year, an authorized list of textbooks is issued by the MoE. Local authorities are responsible for selecting one volume of textbooks for schools in their areas. As previously stated, unlike many other countries, a textbook has always been used as a guidebook in classrooms in Primary Education in China. To most schools,

¹⁹ Interviewees might not want to admit that they have specific targeting audience of their publication. However, there were other volumes of EFL textbooks designed around the same period. Some of these books are currently used in rather developed areas by a smaller scale of pupils.

especially those in less developed areas, a selected volume of textbooks will be the only resource available for English teaching and learning.

In most cases, an English textbook serves as both a teaching material and a ‘content standard’ in Chinese schools. Interviewee No. 8 said that:

“...it depends on the process of textbook design... talking about the content standard, for example in the US; it is designed by each State. However, in China, provincial educational authorities are not able to design their own content standard, so the national curriculum provides a content standard for them. In this case, an enumeration (i.e. of cultural information) is not considered the best method, because it is almost impossible to cover every option. So we left this task to textbook designers, when in fact, in theory, this task is supposed to be handed to local educational authorities. Currently, we are not capable to do so. Apart from Shanghai city, no province has its own syllabus.”

Thus, the process of textbook design can be considered as part of the creation of the national curriculum. Textbook production is a four-step process comprising: project approval, design, censorship²⁰ and the publishing of textbooks.

The 2001 curriculum works as a basis (or principle) for English textbook design. The curriculum contains a brief guideline for textbook design, alongside other components, such as principles, aims, contents, pedagogical outcomes and assessment. Most curriculum designers were heavily involved in textbook production, as chief editors or censors. Interviewee No.5 mentioned that if a curriculum designer did not participate in textbook design, he or she would be a member of textbook censorship in most cases. In the designing process, chief editors were mainly in charge of the creation of frameworks for textbook design. In a way, it was them who actualise the communication between curriculum design and textbook production teams.

²⁰As noted earlier, this censorship evaluates both the accuracy of subject knowledge and ideological correctness of information covered in textbooks.

As interviewee No.8 mentioned:

“... no one in publishing has ever communicated with the curriculum design team. But the fact is that only very few curriculum designers haven’t been involved in textbook design. It led to a more exact interpretation of the curriculum in textbook production.”

Interviewee No.9 claimed that:

“Textbooks are designed according to the national curriculum. There is no guideline for textbook design. It is a reflection of designers’ understanding of the curriculum, pedagogy and students.”

The writing and editing work of textbook contents was carried out by editors and writers in Chinese and foreign publishers. Some teachers were involved in textbook design as writers or feedback providers. These teachers were mainly responsible for designing or evaluating activities which could be used in EFL classrooms.

To ensure the quality of textbooks produced, censorship of textbooks has been established in China. This censorship is carried out by the State Textbooks Examination and Approval Committee (STEAC). All textbooks for compulsory subjects in Basic Education have to be examined and approved by this committee before publication, in terms of the accuracy and the ideological correctness of textbook knowledge. Again, the curriculum is used as a guide for censorship. However, in practice, there is no content standard for this step of textbook production which means editors/writers are largely given a free hand during this stage of textbook design. Following this logic, what we may be able to say is that these editors/writers play a vital role in knowledge production and cultural reproduction, which is the essence of textbook production.

6.4 Production of school knowledge and cultural reproduction

Apple (1989) mentioned that the State always attempts to intervene in textbook production and distribution through its policies. In the context of Chinese Primary Education, the production of textbooks is strongly affected by the launch of the 2000 educational reform and the 2001 curriculum policy. Until 1993, the People's Education Press (PEP) was exclusively authorized by the State Education Commission (now the MoE) to design the syllabi and textbooks for primary and secondary schools subjects. Currently, all publishers are eligible to apply for the project of textbook design for Basic Education. However, the appearance of a less regulated textbook market does not mean the coming of a democratic educational system. Furthermore, this does not change the fact that, the production of school knowledge and cultural reproduction, is still under strict control by ruling groups. In China, a centralised educational system remains while educational policies are designed and implemented through a top-down approach. Meanwhile, the production of school knowledge is strictly controlled by the State and other ruling groups.

6.4.1 Whose knowledge?

The nature of 'school knowledge', which is delivered through the school curriculum has been widely discussed. In any society, the existence of a gap between 'popular culture' and 'elite culture', which highlights the differences in culture of social groups, is an interesting issue for discussion. In the past, when educational opportunities were offered to certain social groups only, 'school knowledge' clearly represented the culture of elite groups, especially in maintaining their intellectual and moral leadership (Lawton, 1975). Today, public education is no longer a privilege in terms of social class. In many cases, a national curriculum is established to deliver knowledge which represents a 'common culture'. However, it is doubtful that such a 'common culture' can be generally extended to every social group, including lower class groups and minorities. Rather than simply being a 'common culture', it is possible to argue that, a national curriculum has the effect of unifying oppositional

and oppressed groups. Therefore, the questions: “whose knowledge is delivered?” and “whose culture is reproduced through education?” are still necessary. In the case of education in China, another issue; “who is speaking?” may also be focused upon.

The ‘nationwide movement’ of curriculum reform

On entering the new century, the Chinese government introduced an educational reform which aimed at the construction of a suitable educational system for China’s comprehensive redevelopment in a globalized world. The old national curriculum was widely criticized for its teacher-centred pedagogy and dated contents in the educational field and mass media. Interviewee No.2 stated:

“...in a globalised world, how do we want to develop our Basic Education?”

...in our education [at that time], questions with no right or wrong answer were given ‘correct answers’, as pupils were encouraged to memorize them.”

He gave an example which appeared in a Chinese language test paper:

Fill the space and complete the sentence.

Snow is melted, it turns to_____.

As this interviewee mentioned, a girl filled the space with ‘spring’. However her answer, although rather beautiful, was considered ‘wrong’, because the only correct answer was ‘water’. A literary question was treated as a scientific question and an accurate answer was expected. As interviewee No.2 said:

“This tended to lead pupils to think only of what the educators wanted them to do, to learn what kind of answer was expected. Then when pupils were faced with a new issue, they thought; ‘what did the teacher say, what did the books say and what is the accurate answer?’ Rather than ‘what do I think?’”

He also commented the quality of English language teaching in Chinese education at that time:

“Chinese pupils spend far too much time on learning English language; however, we are still not able to use English very well (especially speaking). It is hard to spend a lot of time on things that are not easily assessed in education in China.”

In hope of changing this situation, an education reform was proposed and promoted by policy makers from the central government.

“...Vice-president Li Lanqing, pointed out that our Basic Education can be summed up with four words: ‘complicated, difficult, limited and old’ in an educational conference in State Council”, Interviewee No.2 said.

Under these circumstances, following a top-down decision making process, the Chinese State Council launched a national curriculum reform in 2001. However, this reform and its policies, especially the new EFL curriculum, were criticized as a radical and wide-reaching educational policy (Ryan, Kang, Mitchell and Erickson, 2009). For subjects such as Chinese language and mathematics, the reform promotes a one-step movement to a relatively ‘updated’ stage. However, in terms of the EFL subject, this round of curriculum reforms aims to accomplish the promotion of English teaching in Primary Education and quality improvement all at once.

By 2000, only 5.7% of primary schools in China offered English as a subject. In order to ‘make Chinese citizens more competitive in the globalised world’, the 2001 EFL curriculum required all primary schools to provide English lessons. As interviewee No.1 claimed,

“since the late 1990s, Chinese policy makers have started to consider the possibilities of bringing the EFL subject into Primary Education....in order to make Chinese citizens more competitive in the globalised world”.

Despite scholars' concerns about the shortage of qualified English teachers in China, the MoE decided to launch a new curriculum for the EFL subject in Basic Education. Apparently, the need for English learning in a globalised context was too strong to be delayed. However, not much attention from the decision makers was paid to the possibility of promoting English teaching in all Chinese primary schools.

This reform is criticized as a 'radical' movement by scholars. Interviewee No.1 said that,

"In China, since we had this intention [of promoting English teaching and learning in Basic Education], we decided to start it immediately in order to complete the nationwide promotion step by step."

A 'Chinese style of policy making approach' was commented on by a few interviewees. According to interviewee No.2,

"Sometimes, it is only the decision of policy makers.... Academic discussion and research are not considered important in policy design... many educators think that China is in fact not ready for promoting English in all primary schools."

... in terms of questions such as 'whether it is possible to have EFL subject in primary schools', 'which grade should we start to offer EFL lessons', 'should it (EFL) be a compulsory or optional subject (in primary schools)' and 'what linguistic knowledge should be taught', they are actually not solved. Today, we are still debating about the possible solutions. It is always a problem that sometimes a policy was not created based on in-depth research; the process (of policy making) may be simplified by a leader's preference."

Interviewee No.1 made it very clear:

"...it is the Chinese style of policy making. It is a top-down approach ...We set a goal. And try to achieve it as quickly as possible rather than waiting until everything"

is ready. We knew that maybe we were not ready to bring English into all classrooms. But the policy makers' decision was part of a long-term development plan for China. So we had to follow it ...in such a big country, it is hard for a policy to be equally transferred into practice in different areas..."

We might not be able to claim that the difficulties were underestimated by the MoE. Instead, it is possible to describe the tradition of policy making in contemporary China as a 'nationwide movement'²¹. Following the latest curriculum reformation in 2001, all primary schools in China are required to offer the EFL subject from grade 3 while schools in economically developed areas are encouraged to start English lessons from grade 1.

As interviewee No.2 claimed, there were doubts about whether it was possible to promote English nationwide. In the policy making process, there is always the dilemma of equality in educational policy provision in China. Interviewee No.1 noted:

"... We knew that maybe we were not ready to promote English throughout the entire country..... the situation might be problematic, but I do believe that it is just a temporary stage. Things will get better."

It shows the policy makers and education administrators are aware of the concerns over the potential challenges educators may face in promoting EFL subject in China. However, these difficulties were described as a 'temporary stage' which will be overcome. It implies the idea that the benefit of the nation as a whole, which is its rapid redevelopment for China, is prioritised.

²¹ As discussed in Chapter Two, this tendency can be seen in previous educational policies. China's governance follows a cycle of 'decentralization-centralization-decentralization'. This has resulted in instability in educational policy in modern China. When the PRC was founded in 1949, no EFL course was offered in Primary Education, although it was taught in secondary schools. In 1954, the MoE issued a statement to cancel foreign language subjects in all schools due to the lack of teachers and teaching resources. Based on this statement, foreign language subjects (i.e. English and Russian) were cancelled throughout the entire country. English language teachers had to change their jobs. This policy was criticized for its 'excessive generalization'. Later, in the 1960s, the MoE launched a new curriculum in which all secondary schools in developed areas were encouraged to offer foreign language subjects. After the launch of Economic Reform and the Open Door policy in 1978, the MoE promoted foreign language subjects in Secondary Education.

It is clear that the welfare of people in less developed areas, which are considered to be a smaller group compared to the State as a whole, was not considered a priority in this policy making process. According to the Chinese tradition of group harmony, a compromise had to be made for ‘the bigger picture’ in this case. However, the sacrificed group was absent in the decision making process, especially at this initial stage when a national reformation of EFL curriculum was promoted.

Inequalities in rural and urban development

The decision making on 2001 EFL curriculum shows the policy makers’ eagerness for China’s redevelopment²². After the victory of the Communists, although the establishment of the PRC brought peace to China, the nation fell prey to a series of unsustainable political movements in its early years. Following the end of the Cultural Revolution (criticized as ‘ten years of calamity’), the State Council launched the Open Door policy and rapidly put the focus back on social and economic development of the country. This sudden social change awakened Chinese leaders’ ambition towards a comprehensively developed state. To some extent, such a desire encouraged social policies to be updated in any possible way. Interviewee No.3 said:

“Sometimes [it seems as though], changing or reforming is the natural state of policy making in China....”

Such a frequent nationwide change, as mentioned above, has contributed to the gap between developed and less educationally developed areas in China, which is mainly

²² This urgency can also be analysed from a historical perspective. There has always been a strong drive among policy makers in the PRC to compete with the western world and reclaim China’s position as the world leader in both an economic and a political sense. For example, during the Great Leap Forward in the 1950s, ‘catch up with the UK and preponderate over the USA’ was promoted by the Chinese State Council as a slogan for this state-directed economic policy. To Chinese people, the modern history of China is perceived as a history of frequent bullying and humiliation by the west. Chinese people are generally proud of the nation’s long history and rich culture which has had a strong impact on other Asian cultures. Before the late 18th century, China was the world’s leading economy. However, with the onset of the Industrial Revolution, Imperial China started to struggle to keep up with the European states. Since 1840, when the first Opium War between China and Britain occurred, China has experienced a series conflicts with aggressively expanding capitalist western countries, as well as Japan. The combination of foreign aggression and internal rebellions which occurred at around the same time, led to the collapse of the Qing Dynasty in 1911. A republican government and the Nationalist Party were established in 1912. However this did not bring the nation to peace, with regional territories competing for control. In 1937 the country was invaded by Japan and subsequently engulfed by World War II. When World War II ended in 1945, a civil war continued between the Nationalist and Communist parties.

addressed in terms of the inequalities in urban and rural development. A nationwide movement always creates leading groups, leaving others behind, as a result of discrepancies in policy implementation.

Indeed, there was a strong need for English language learning in China for economic and educational reasons. As stated in Chapter Three, it is noted as outcome of the launch of the Open Door policy in China. However, resources were unevenly distributed in the public and private educational fields. This imbalance in the development of educational provision was exacerbated by the 2001 EFL curriculum. The NCCT research shows that there was a rapid growth in the amount of English language teaching nationwide. At the early stage of policy making, the NCCT carried out research on the condition of human resources for the promotion of the EFL subject in Primary Education. Until the year 2000, 5.7% of primary schools had the EFL subject in their curriculum. In 2002, this increased to 19%. In 2004, 35% of primary schools in China offered English courses. In 2006, about 62% of primary schools offered English classes to pupils.

However, the quality of teaching has been mentioned by interviewees as a major concern. There is a gap between the educational resources that urban and rural schools possess. This led to a series of difficulties for rural schools such as a lack of qualified teachers and teaching resources. Interviewee No.1 claimed:

“... at this moment, our major concern is the lack of qualified English teachers. Two temporary solutions are used to deal with this issue. The first one is teacher recruitment from non-normal universities. The second way is ‘a teacher transfer’ project. Current teachers of other subjects can be switched into English teaching... then you can imagine the quality of English teaching. Most of these transferred teachers speak English, but there is a small percentage of these transferred English teachers who do not actually speak English, they only act as a course organizer and are in charge of playing videos. For transferred teachers who have learnt English language, the quality of their teaching is still problematic. They may have poor pronunciation and lack second language teaching skills. They are weak in basic

skills such as pronunciation, hand writing skills and language teaching skills... I am not sure about this [the percentage of those transferred non-English speakers in the whole English teaching team]. But most of them are in rural areas.”

Apart from public educational resources, a large number of private language teaching institutions were organized to offer English lessons to learners of all age ranges from young children to adults. However, most of these paid English learning opportunities were provided in urban or economically developed areas. Meanwhile limited resources were left for students in less developed areas within both public and private educational institutions.

The urban-rural gap in educational provision is not a new topic in China. Schools in developed areas hold more educational resources such as better teachers and more teaching resources. To some extent, these gaps were increased by the implementation of the 2001 EFL curriculum reform. According to this new curriculum, schools are required to have 2 or 3 English classes per week. In economically developed areas, pupils may have 6 or 8 English classes per week. However, in many rural areas, English language is taught by teachers with little or no language teaching experiences. It is hard for schools to meet the minimum criteria of the EFL curriculum in terms of teaching hours, due to the difficulty in finding staff.

As mentioned earlier, the 2001 EFL curriculum was criticized as a radical educational policy. Although educational researchers noticed the unequal development of educational provision in the second language subject, this policy was still launched and requested to be implemented nationwide. Interviewee No.2 said that:

“... we [Chinese] would try to achieve it step by step rather than waiting until everything is ready. We [policy makers] knew that maybe it were not ready for bringing English into all classroom.

... there was a strong need to promote English language in Basic Education. It was promoted by political leaders as a strategy for China to compete in this global world. What we are facing today (difficulties) was considered as temporary problems which could be sorted out in the future.”

There exists an undeniable gap among different areas in China in terms of economic and social development. However, educational policy making remains ‘centralized’ and ‘nationwide’ in style. To some extent, it is influenced by the traditional Chinese value of group harmony and the nation’s turbulent history in the modern times.

In Chinese culture, a person tends to be perceived as a member acting within a social group or groups, rather than as an individual. The great goal of Confucianism, the idea of ‘social harmony’, became an important aspect of cultural identity and has dominated Chinese ideological history. Traditionally, Chinese people tend to deal with social relationships with a harmonious strategy. When the benefit of one group is in conflict with another, the smaller group is normally encouraged to put the needs of the larger group first. According to this logic, the nation’s wellbeing, as a bigger group, is more important than any individual or small group’s welfare in the country.

6.4.2 Knowledge production and cultural reproduction through textbook design

A textbook is normally the only shared material used in classroom teaching and learning. In particular, it serves as the primary carrier of school knowledge and works as a medium of cultural transmission in schools. For this reason, dominant groups always attempt to intervene in textbook production and distribution (Apple, 1993). As noted in Chapter Three, besides intense ideological pressure from the State or dominant social groups, the content of textbooks is also influenced by social-economic circumstances. Unlike other publications, as Apple (1985a, p86) points out:

“the industry of textbook publishing remains perilously poised between the requirements and restraints of commerce and the responsibilities and obligations that it must bear as a prime guardian of the symbolic culture of the nation.”

The vital role played by a national textbook makes its adoption a process of cultural reproduction through confrontation, compromise and the incorporation of contending ideologies and needs between various social groups.

In China, various factors are involved in textbook production, such as the MoE, editors/writers – and to a lesser extent – sales and marketing personnel. Although the MoE works as a gatekeeper in the production of a national textbook in China, textbook design is often undertaken by the same groups of people who may also act as editors or censors. They are considered as representatives of the intellectuals group in China. By integrating analyses of their involvement in the decision making process of the national curriculum reform, we can gain a good deal of insight into how particular aspects of popular and elite culture are presented in published form.

Intellectuals

In China, the term ‘intellectual’ is sometimes used to refer to anyone who has received a degree in higher education. Historically, in social science writing, especially in Gramsci’s texts²³, and as noted in Chapter One, the trend is to distinguish intellectuals from officials, civil servants, enterprise managers and professionals. Unlike other groups, intellectuals can be described by the following characteristics, as individuals who:

- 1) pursue knowledge for its own sake, while remaining politically interested and socially unattached (Weber, 1991, p129-156);
- 2) are actively engaged in public life through their intellectual, cultural or symbolic products (Dickstein, 1992, p92);

²³ Gramsci emphasised this term, intellectuals, with the focus on their functions in a society. He claimed that, the intellectuals are those ‘who have had the clear and marked conception that our epoch, the epoch of large industry, of great workers’ cities, of tumultuous and intense life, should have new forms of art, of philosophy of customs, of language’ (translated by Pozzolini, 1970, p111).

3) demonstrate ‘antagonism towards the establishment’ (Gu and Goldman, 2004, p3).

Bourdieu (1990) defines intellectuals as ‘a dominated fraction of the dominant class’. In Chinese history, intellectuals have always been highly valued. In Imperial times, education and its assessment – the national official examination – was the main passageway for social mobility between the dominated and the dominant group. The scholar–official class worked alongside the sovereign to rule the State as part of the dominant group. A Chinese style of elite intellectual nationalism was gradually shaped. It drew a clear boundary between the intellectuals and the public, creating a division between educated and non-educated and placed the former in a position of power and privilege.

However, within the ruling class, intellectuals have always been dominated by other elite classes, such as politicians, militaries and state bureaucrats in the modern era (White, 1987; Gu and Glodman, 2004). The relationship between intellectuals and the power elites vary in different periods. Intellectuals have played a crucial role in China’s social development throughout the nation’s history. In contemporary China, their role has fluctuated between ‘ally’ and ‘enemy’ of the dominant class.

During the early decades of this century, the Chinese intelligentsias were engaged in a process which introduced the modern western concept of ‘the State’ to China. Under the increasing influence of Marxism, traditional society and its cultural identity were rejected. China experienced a vast social reform during the struggle between the communists and non-communists. After the Communists’ victory, a new order of social class was constructed according to occupation. The boundaries of different classes were emphasized during the class struggle era between the 1950s and 1970s. During the various political movements, the intellectuals were denigrated as the so-called ‘stinking old ninth’ among ‘class enemies’. They were redefined as ‘an internal part of the working class’ by the Party-State after the start of the economic reforms in 1978.

Gu and Goldman (2004, p6) describe the intellectual sphere as a 'symbolic realm of knowledge, values and meaning'. As Bourdieu (1993) stated, the intellectuals' memberships in the dominant group associate with greater or lesser distance from the dominant faction. In China, the different relational patterns of intellectuals to the communist Party-State depend upon which space they are located in.

Some intellectuals hold positions within the communist Party-State as 'establishment intellectuals'. As Gu and Goldman (2004) stated, among intellectuals who work in the government or state-owned organizations, only those involved in state management in the government are qualified as 'establishment intellectuals'. As mentioned earlier, it is a powerful Chinese tradition that, 'scholar-officials' get involved in state management with other elite groups. Since the foundation of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the power of the Party-State permeated every field of social life. The political control of culture was perceived as legitimate in the state socialist political system. A large percentage of intellectuals were employed by various state organs. However, the internal position of intellectuals within the intellectual field may vary depending on the cultural, social and economic capital, individuals hold.

Intellectuals as practitioners of knowledge production and cultural reproduction

In the centralized Chinese educational system, little is left to teachers' discretion. The State is very prescriptive about the kinds of knowledge that must be taught, the learning outcomes and goals of that teaching, and how it must be carried out. In 2001, the top-down curriculum reform, started with the vice-premier's proposal. Interviewee No.2 described the policy making process:

"Another important point is that, this reform was promoted by policy makers from the central government. Vice-premier Li Lanqing, pointed out that our Basic Education can be summed up in four words, 'complicated, difficult, limited and old' in an educational conference in the State Council. He gave us an example involving

his own granddaughter, regarding our accurate standards in math education. With his encouragement, an educational conference was organized in 2001, and an educational reform was promoted.”

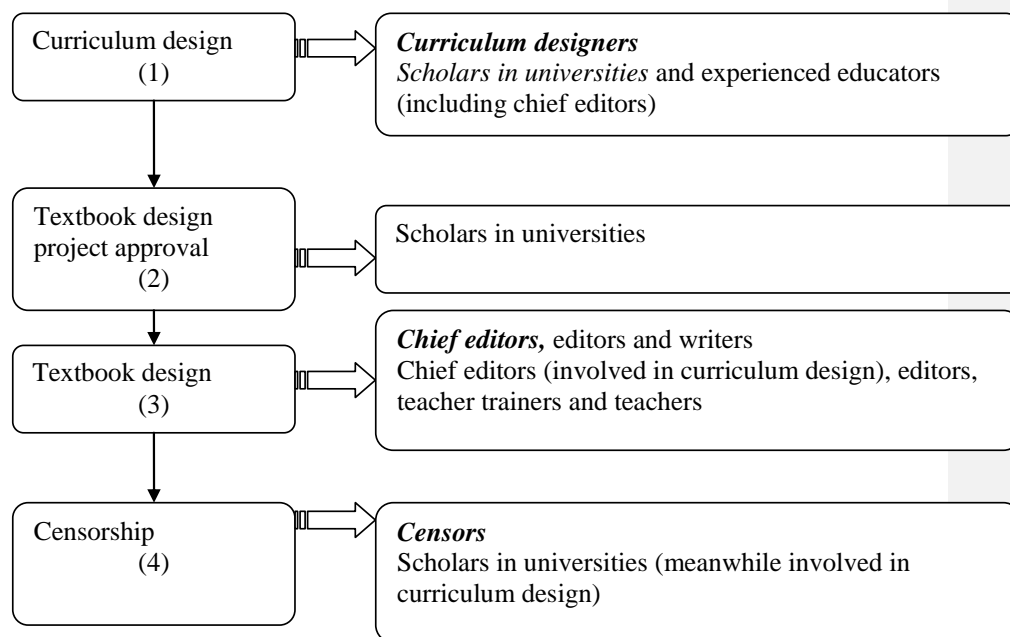
The MoE was in charge of the administration of national curriculum design and its implementation. It also has strong impact on textbook production in acting as a gatekeeper. However, the detailed decision making was not completed within the government.

To respond to my question regarding curriculum design, Interviewee No3 said:

“... for detailed information regarding the curriculum of the EFL subject, I would like to suggest you to speak to curriculum designers. They will be able to give you accurate answers, I am not confident answering these questions, I am afraid I may not be able to give you accurate answers. People like me would be able to tell you things like the bigger picture, such as educational policy, the framework of curriculum design and the target of EFL subject etc.”

As mentioned in earlier in this chapter, the curriculum team²⁴ of the MoE in China is rather small compared to similar organizations in other Asian countries or regions. Detailed curriculum design work was completed by a curriculum design team consisting of around 100 subject experts from higher educational institutions. As shown in diagram 6.1, most of these experts were involved in the later textbook design process as project examiners, chief editors or textbook censors. (Diagram 6.1)

²⁴ The Division of Curriculum Development (DCD) in the MoE and its agency, the National Centre for Curriculum and Textbook Development (NCCT) are mainly in charge of the administration of national curriculum design and supervision of curriculum implementation. In total, there is twelve staff working for these two agencies.



Therefore, the national curriculum was designed by these educators, rather than civil servants in the MoE. In other words, the curriculum is designed by intellectuals (chief editors, editors and writers) rather than the politicians or other ruling groups. Although they are not staff members in any governmental organizations, these intellectuals from universities did engage in the policy making processes. The national curriculum, which is responsible for the production of official knowledge, was not created by other ruling groups, such as politicians and establishment intellectuals, but non-governmental intellectuals in China.

With the launch of 2001 EFL curriculum, the MoE called for a round of textbook development. The production of national textbooks in China follows a ‘project approval-design-censorship-publishing’ routine. (See Diagram 6.1) Firstly, each applicant submits a proposal which includes information about the background of the textbook designing team, a framework of textbook design and a few sample chapters. The proposal will be evaluated for its suitability in relation to the criteria of the new curriculum. Once the proposal is approved by the State Textbooks Examination and Approval Committee (STEAC), the publisher may start working on their textbook

project. Later, the completed design has to be examined and approved by the STEAC in terms of ideological content, scientific spirit and adaptability to classroom instruction.

On the surface, the State plays a significant part within this process, as the MoE organizes the approval of textbook design project and textbook censorship. However, again, each ‘governmental’ action is actually fulfilled by intellectuals such as scholars from universities and research institutions and experienced teaching professionals in Basic Education. Most of these intellectuals are also involved in textbook development as chief editors or censors.

The practice of ‘common sense’ in local cultural reproduction

Various aspects of cultural values are represented in EFL textbooks, such as social expectations regarding gender, traditional kinship and patriotism. The chief editors of textbooks strongly influenced the way cultural values are presented. As interviewee No.17 mentioned, the framework of a textbook is mainly designed by the chief editors. Taking ‘NV English’ and ‘PEP English’ as examples, the former is considered rather ‘Chinese’, according to editors/writers and classroom teachers, while the latter is slightly more westernized. The chief editor of PEP English was educated in Canada. Although this educational background does not necessarily prove his preference for Northern American culture, one of his assistants did note the chief editor’s recognition of westernized cultural values, such as social equality in terms of gender and race. Interviewee No.17 said:

“Our chief editor is kind of a western-minded gentleman. He paid a lot of attention to [children’s expected] manners and behaviours [in textbook design].”

Unlike ‘NV English’, images of a father engaged in housework and a black family appear in ‘PEP English’.

During the design process, editors/writers are required to follow the national curriculum. In fact, there is no detailed instruction and regulations in terms of textbook development provided by the MoE. As mentioned by editors/writers, the presentation of many cultural aspects in textbooks relies on editors/writers' 'common sense'. Such a 'sense of what is common' is a cultural system. It is a set of assumptions which normally remain unspoken. They are basic rules in societies which are so much a part of people's lives that they do not have to be expressed. Interviewee No.17 reported that,

"There is no clear regulation for what girls should do or how boys should behave. I don't think we consciously emphasized the invisible social gender role in textbooks. It is just 'common sense' I suppose. It is like an invisible standard..."

The fact is that, as described by Apple (2004, p120),

"these 'common sense's are shared assumptions, the product of specific groups of people, and are commonly accepted by most educators."

When Page (2010, p530) examined, he also referred to Geertz (1953),

"'common sense' is knowledge that is unscrutinised, what we humans know in ourselves or as a species — 'an ancient tangle of received practices, accepted beliefs, habitual judgments, and untangled emotions'."

The content of 'common sense' varies across cultures and within them, as these shared assumptions are often historically and ideologically 'conditioned'. They are hidden social rules about what is considered good or bad performance within certain groups. One of the means by which people become culturally and economically stratified is through the application of values and categories to them during the educational process. Since schooling is always considered as a crucial means of political control operated by the dominant groups, it is crucial to see what, or whose, common-sense social rules are applied in education.

The presentation of local culture in EFL textbooks reflects the editors/writers' 'common sense', which is shaped by economic, ideological and social class conditions. In 'NV English', females are portrayed from a rather traditional social perspective, such as 'a mother cooks at home with her apron on'. While male characters tend to be portrayed as the 'money maker', 'a relaxing dad' and 'successful role model'. As a response to this editors/writers mentioned 'common sense'. In order to bring children's lives into classroom teaching, editors/writers believe that textbooks should present elements of pupils' daily lives. The portrayal of gender in textbooks implies not necessary gender inequality in Chinese society, but social expectations of gender.

'Common sense' may vary among different social classes. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, both 'NV English' and 'PEP English' have a strong urban and middle class orientation. Questions regarding the heavy emphasis on professional occupations in textbooks and the frequent use of western fast food images were raised during the field work. Both volumes of textbooks contain narratives with parents holding professional posts. Doctors and teachers are used relatively frequently in textbooks. Meanwhile, a large amount of fast food images such as hamburgers and Coke/cola were used in 'NV English'.

Interviewee No.17 explained this choice as 'a strategy of language teaching and learning', based on the assumption that children are familiar with these 'common occupations'.

Interviewee No.16 mentioned:

"There was debate about the use of these images, mainly regarding if it is appropriate to have fast food in textbooks due to concerns about unhealthy diet. Eventually, editors/writers decided to keep them because they are very close to children's lives – this might make our textbooks more interesting."

In a way, these assumptions about children's lives show the editor/writers' urban-middle class biases.

As the interviewee stated, they aimed to bring children's lives into textbooks and second language learning to make learners familiar with the context. However, in these two volumes of EFL textbooks, editors/writers made a connection between textbook knowledge and middle class life. As noted earlier, as the primary carrier of official knowledge, textbook production is strictly controlled by the Party-State regarding its ideological correctness. During the practice of textbook design, editors/writers have a great deal of autonomy in the transmission of cultural value messages. To some extent, through an invisible process, not only the cultural values reinforced by the dominant groups were transmitted, but cultural values rooted in the intellectual group itself were also reproduced in the national textbooks.

Textbook design was outlined by educational policy makers who are mainly politicians. However, the actual design process was dominated by educators who were intellectuals working alongside policy makers in a Party-State. Although the national curriculum has to be followed as a principle in textbook design, 'common sense' worked as a hidden but dominant operator in cultural and knowledge reproduction through the EFL subject in China. At the same time, unlike other subjects, the EFL subject also works as a window for the introduction of the target culture. It means that the production of EFL textbooks is also influenced by other cultures in a global world. Such an introduction of foreign culture in education is subject to both the obvious restraint of official social control and the hidden challenge of the local social culture.

6.5 Cultural globalization

It was seen in the 1996 EFL curriculum when it stated that,

"A foreign language is a very important means to learn knowledge, to receive information from the rest of the world, and to maintain international communication."

... English learning aims at the understanding of other states and nations in order to ensure students' better understanding of Chinese traditions and culture...to make them be able to adapt the needs of China's social, economical and scientific development and international communication. ”

The 2001 national EFL curriculum emphasises the importance of learning English from the perspective of cultural learning in order to get access to the world. It clearly states that:

“English language plays an increasingly important role with the development of informative social life and economic globalisation. English language has become the lingua franca widely used in many fields such as science and international trade. In order to keep up with global economic growth and bring China into an economically advantageous stage, it is necessary to improve the quality of English language teaching in Chinese Basic Education” (PEP, 2001, p1).

Interviewee No.1 also mentioned a motivation of English learning:

“Not only at primary level, but also in secondary or even Higher Education, the EFL subject should not be treated as a tool. It is a window for students to explore the world outside China... with the development of globalisation, it is necessary to emphasise international awareness.”

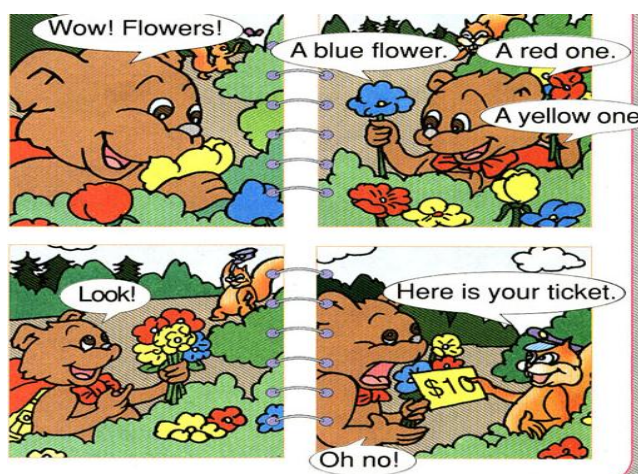
The 2001 EFL curriculum emphasised the learner's cultural awareness in second language learning. Regarding the content related to cultural awareness in textbooks, interviewee No.6 said:

“Our children should learn how to behave appropriately in the globalised world. It is widely accepted international standards that we should teach in English language lessons. It is not recommended to focus on a certain nation and a certain country.”

As part of cultural values, these ‘international standards’ mentioned by interviewee No.6 are the result of ‘cultural standardization’, which is also criticized as an outcome of ‘cultural imperialism’. In a way, it is a one way learning process: the flow of knowledge and information from the powerful western countries to the powerless developing and under-developed countries. This flow may be a selective process which happens over time and is influenced by the need for economic growth in the west. In this case, these ‘international standards’ are ‘western standards’. Interviewee No.1 made this point very clear by defining ‘the world’ as delivered in the EFL subject in China:

“Mainly means the western world. Mostly developed countries where people speak English.”

In a section of ‘PEP English’, as shown in picture 6.5, children are told not to pick flowers from the garden and the bear was given a ‘ten US dollar ticket’ for breaking the rule.



(Picture 6.5: PEP English, G3-1-30)

Regarding the appearance of US currency, interviewee No.10 responded:

“It is not a joke; it meant to tell children not to pick flowers. Why do we use ‘US currency’? It is because this is designed as a story that happened in a foreign context.”

In this example, the US currency was used to represent an international setting. It implied the editors/writers’ understanding of a global context and the power of US culture, which is an outcome of cultural globalisation.

The flow of western culture is also shown in the use of images in PEP and NV English. With the purpose of bringing children’s lives into the classroom and making textbooks familiar to children, many images of fast food and soft drinks are used in the ‘NV English’ textbooks.

Interviewee No.21 claimed that,

“... we try to take everything that comes from their familiar table, so it depends on the book, depends on the topic that we were doing..... well, yes, because culturally they wanted to do it, because at that time, I know there are McDonald’s in Beijing... those are the ones that children will be familiar with... you know they are universal...”

Indeed, although the success of ‘McDonald’s’ and its chain operation model has had a remarkable influence on the world’s economic development and created a modern lifestyle. However, today it is doubtful that McDonald’s food can still represent children’s lifestyle in the west. To many parents, it is not currently seen as a healthy or recommended diet, even in mass media. However, it is apparently very popular and even brought into classrooms in primary schools in China. It is arguable that, ‘McDonald’ or fast food represents a universal reality. In fact, it shows the strong influence of US culture in the world.

On the other hand, the concept of ‘cultural imperialism’ may not be comprehensive enough to summarize the phenomenon of cross-national cultural interactions. It is

also doubtful that 'cultural homogeneity' is considered a positive term in the sense of values and beliefs. Held et al (1999) pointed out that; cultural globalization creates a sense of identity or belonging. The character of a certain national identity appears stronger, by contrast, when it meets another culture or an expression of a national symbol.

In the case of EFL teaching in Chinese Primary Education, interviewees are not concerned that Chinese culture may be invaded by culture of English-speaking countries, meaning western culture in most circumstances. Interviewee No.1 said:

"They [foreign cultures] are all used as window for children to see various cultures. I wouldn't be worried about the influence of foreign countries on Chinese children. After all, they are living in China and growing up in a Chinese context... we don't think the promotion of English language will make children lose their cultural identity as Chinese citizens. Besides the EFL subject, there are plenty of other subjects to emphasise Chinese culture in schooling, such as Chinese language, history, geography, arts and sciences."

Interviewee No.9 also commented:

"It is not necessary to worry about the competition of the target and local cultures in the EFL subject in Primary Education. Due to children's language abilities [there won't be too much culture related information]. Besides, most of the English learning time is spend within school... And there are not many scenarios of children going abroad in the textbooks."

This does not mean that there is no possibility of such a cultural movement. However, interviewees are confident because a) children are learning English language in China and are engaged in Chinese society; b) owing to the language ability and developmental stage of pupils in Primary Education, not much culture related information needs to be covered in EFL textbooks; c) textbooks are not considered as a major medium for cultural transmission.

Culture flows between societies through various means. However, a foreign culture always has to be ‘digested’ through a unique process in a certain cultural system which can be considered as an ‘organism’.

In the case of China, in fact, as in many other countries, the flow of foreign culture is restrained by both a social control system and local traditions and social culture.

6.5.1 Social control and local reproduction of knowledge

While culture is often seen as entity transmitted from one society to another, or flowing between nations, it also works as an important medium for all types of social interactions. The flow of culture is not only a spread of information, but most importantly, it is a process of creating trans-national understanding, which has not necessarily become a part of the reproduction of a certain local culture. Such an understanding is often produced through direct communication and presentation of modern media, such as newspapers, broadcasting and, more recently, the internet.

In recent decades, there has been a phenomenal growth in the circulation of cultures, which comes as no surprise if we think about what is on television and on the internet. It demonstrates the notion of globalization as being characterized by the intensification of flows that transcend national boundaries. However, this raises questions such as ‘who is speaking?’ and ‘what information is available to the public?’ within these cultural transmission processes. Research shows that there has been a decline in the market share of public television corporations in many countries (Held, et, al, 2004). Public television services, which form the majority of a national broadcasting system, are available to all and are insulated from the vested interests of government and corporations. Regardless of the decline, these public service broadcastings are still often considered as the official or most authorized ‘sounding board’ of the State. Although foreign channels and the internet are available to more people than ever before, most of them get access to foreign news through domestic newspapers, TV channels or websites.

In China, all media is censored, including broadcasting, publications, and internet and so on, throughout the country. The Party-State devoted vast energy and resources to control the media, in order to maintain social stability and assert political control. This comprehensive media control is operated by four methods, including legal, economic, technological and political. Media production is restrained by related laws and regulation. The majority of media is owned by the State, which also utilizes technology to counter the proliferation of information through the internet. The Communist Party of China (CPC) maintains strict control over the content of media and official censorship. The media is viewed by the Chinese Communist Party as a powerful state propaganda tool to shape the values and perspective of the entire population.

Alongside media censorship for ‘inappropriate’ information, the State’s social control is also maintained through the creation and promotion of officially sanctioned social values. Since the foundation of the PRC in 1949, ideological promotion has never stopped. To some extent, the emphasis of such a strict and obvious control over social values is rooted in the longstanding Confucian philosophy of traditional culture. After the launch of the Open Door policy, the State shifted its focus to economic development. Meanwhile, enhancing ‘the social construction of ideological infrastructure’ is paid much attention by the Party-State. In 2006, the president of China, Hu Jintao, called on the whole nation to adopt a socialist concept of honour and disgrace, which is a set of moral standards (Hu, 2006). It is known as ‘Eight honours and eight disgraces’, which states:

- “1) Love, do not harm the motherland;*
- 2) Serve; do not disserve the people;*
- 3) Uphold science; do not be ignorant and unenlightened;*
- 4) Work hard; do not be lazy and hate work*
- 5) Be united and help each other; do not gain benefits at the expense of others;*
- 6) Be honest and trustworthy, not profit-mongering at the expense of your values;*
- 7) Be disciplined and law-abiding instead of chaotic and lawless;*
- 8) Know plain living and hard struggle; do not wallow in luxuries and pleasure.”*

Meanwhile, the function of education as a social control mechanism is also highly emphasised by the PRC. However this was not a new invention in contemporary China. On the contrary, it is rooted in Chinese history, owing to the profound influence of Confucian philosophy. It works as a principle in Chinese education and states that citizens should be educated with a series of moral standards, since a State should be ruled by ‘moral criteria’ rather than the law. Moral Education has always been promoted by the State. The national textbook is a good example of this social control in China.

6.5.2 Social control in EFL textbook production

As a primary carrier of school knowledge, the publication of textbooks is always under strict control by the State. After the 2001 curriculum reform, over 30 volumes of EFL textbooks were produced by publishers. Most of them were produced with the cooperation of a Chinese publisher and a foreign publisher. There is no official regulation used to evaluate the eligibility of the foreign publication, however, it is clear that the Chinese publisher is required to take the leading role in actual EFL textbook production.

Interviewee No.1 believed that:

“The Chinese press will evaluate the background of their prospective partners since these textbooks are published for Chinese pupils and the Chinese press will take the leading role in the designing process.”

The selection of a partner can be considered as a commercial action. It is driven by corporate benefit, as well as by the background of the Chinese publisher and the preference of chief editors. As the originators of English language, leading publishers in Britain are always popular. However, one of the chief editors said that they would prefer to work with smaller companies, which are experienced in textbook design. He said that, it is hard to work with world-leading publishers in language teaching, such as Longman and Oxford, because they do not value the Chinese market. These

big companies refuse to authorize Chinese publishers to use their updated publications. The PEP chose to work with Canadian Lingo Media, because it is considered by chief editors that Canadian English is a more 'neutral' language and Lingo Media provided a good proposal. This indicates that cultural consideration is part of the business partner selection process. Meanwhile, the cooperation between PEP and Singapore SNP Ltd, was based on the history between these two publishers in textbook design.

As mentioned earlier, the Chinese publisher always takes the lead in the textbook design process. This is not just because the textbooks are for Chinese pupils, but it is also affected by the criteria of Chinese educational administration on textbook design in terms of curriculum and Moral Education. To start the design of a textbook, a framework is developed. Although various parties such as classroom teachers, writers and editors are involved in the framework design, most decisions are made by the chief editors. As an editor mentioned, the character of certain textbooks is mostly influenced by the ideas of its chief editors. To some extent, the design of the framework is a fairly subjective process although the curriculum has to be followed (Interviewee No.17). During the design process, when the framework works as a guideline, writers and editors from both publishers work together and make decisions through negotiation and compromise. However, since the Chinese publisher takes the leading role, the foreign publisher acts to some extent as a 'proof-reader', to ensure the delivery of original English through EFL textbooks. A few interviewees mentioned the difficulties inherent in cooperation between publishers.

Interviewee No.21 mentioned:

"...we knew for sure that the Beijing the Ministry of Education and PEP (press) have some guidelines to follow, so this is how the partnership worked.

... they (Chinese editors/writers) had a framework in mind, we were trying to give our opinion and negotiate... as it developed, we knew that there were some restrictions, we knew that what would work for English language learning

programming, would not always work for teachers in Beijing who were inexperienced, and so we had to compromise...

... (about the framework) they (Chinese editors/writers) know about the topics, they also know how much time the teacher has in classroom, that's something which is not as a restriction but we (foreign editors/writers) all had no control over when writing a programme... When I wrote the text, we gave suggestions, but because of the time, because of the distance, you never knew how much was listened to...

... as we got sophisticated in the culture that we were introducing, sophisticated in the vocabulary, but we knew that we still needed to follow the framework, at this time, there was little negotiation because the teachers had to do what they were asked... as they [PEP] listened to our ideas, they were restrained by the framework..."

From the Chinese editors/writers' perspective, English-speaking editors/writers are very helpful in activity design since they may bring in new games which Chinese pupils are not familiar with. However, a Chinese editor mentioned that cultural difference might be the reason why many of the texts written by native English speakers eventually weren't used in textbooks. Interviewee No.17 gave an example:

"Once, a foreign writer submitted a story involving a scenario – a group of children went to the countryside for picnic, children were picking flowers on hills. We decided not to use this story because it may imply the idea that 'flower picking' is acceptable; while in fact Chinese children are told not to pick flowers in parks. This scenario contrast to what children is expected to behave in China."

The censorship of school textbooks, in the sense of the ideological correctness of school knowledge, is also emphasized by educational decision makers. Textbooks are considered as 'sounding board' related to ideology and is strictly administrated by the Chinese government. Writers and editors are expected to portray a positive picture of the world to children through textbooks. However, the definition of 'positive world' is blurred. In practice, textbook editors/writers evaluate their work

carefully alongside government-approved ideology to ensure the texts are suitable for Chinese pupils' academic improvement and the development of Chinese society. Interviewee No.1 said:

"... (Regarding the criteria for textbook censorship) Ideology comes first. It might be okay to mention ideology, but it has to be something accepted by the Chinese government. For example, it is not appropriate for textbooks to contain some sensitive issues like the independence of Tibet...Then censors need to check if there are any linguistic mistakes in textbooks. The third thing is to make sure knowledge or information delivered through textbooks is suitable in terms of children's development. The last one is about technical factors in publishing, such as design of settings, binding and prices etc."

In terms of illustrations in textbooks, the size and colour of pictures will be evaluated. The use of maps in textbooks is always paid a lot of attention by both editors/writers and censors. Interviewee No.9 said that, the use of human representations should also be considered, since a balanced presentation of male and female images is required. In order to portray a positive picture of society, editors/writers are told to ensure the use of pleasant images and the absence of tragic stories. Also, school rules such as 'dress code' and 'health and safety' are considered. Interviewee No.17 also gave an example:

"We had a picture with a little boy climbing a tree. It was rejected by the censors, because they think such behaviour [climbing trees] is not appropriate to be presented in textbook due to health and safety concerns."

The ideological censorship of textbook production is not systematic. The curriculum is always used as a principle for both textbook design and censorship. Yet, in practice, there is no content standard in terms of the input related to cultural ideology in textbook guide to censorship, although the 2001 EFL curriculum contains a brief guideline for textbook design. Interviewee No.9, a member of the national textbook censorship team, clarified that:

“...the textbook censorship mainly focuses on the correctness of linguistic knowledge delivered to pupils through textbooks. In terms of culture and cultural value, textbook censorship works rather like a ‘quality control’ device, which can be subjective sometimes.”

A few examples were given by the interviewees, such as the misuse of national flag, images which may be cause for concern regarding children’s safety and racial discrimination.

Interviewee No.5 mentioned:

“A textbook featured a festival sensorial in a certain chapter. Each child had a flag in their hands; however, the editor showing lack of political sensibility, missed the fact that one of the children was in fact given a Taiwanese flag. This is not acceptable.”

Information that poses health and safety issues or that might result in racial discrimination is also prohibited. Interviewee No.17 said:

“the PEP has a long history in textbook design; editors/writers are very experienced. I was told not to emphasise racial characters in textbooks; for example, make sure black characters are not too black... as for health and safety issues, we had a little boy climbing a tree, it was rejected by the censors, since this activity could be dangerous...”

These are rather obvious cases which are very likely to be adjusted in any other circumstances. What makes the EFL textbook so distinct is that a large amount of cultural value-related information is in fact hidden in the ‘ideologically correct’ content and illustrations. However, they seem not to be the focus of consideration in most steps of textbook production and are rather neglected by most participants.

For example, in picture 6.5, children are told not to pick flowers from the garden. Although editors/writers used the US dollar to create a foreign scenario, the story reveals its Chinese style. Chinese pupils may not find ‘do not pick flowers from the garden/park’ unfamiliar, since children have been encouraged to ‘look at’ flowers instead of enjoying them by touch since the 1970s. Similar regulations were launched by some local departments of public service administration to protect the limited public grass areas in Chinese cities. Interviewee No.10 explained that the use of US currency was to show that the story happened in a foreign country. However, the narrative is rooted in Chinese social culture. In a way, this story, as a cultural product, reveals a tendency towards a combination of local and target culture in English learning as a foreign language in China.

Mainly, the censorship of textbooks follows a case-based approach. To a large extent, it relies on the experience and professionalism of censors and again, their ‘common sense’. This ‘common sense’ also plays an important role in cultural value transmission, in the textbook designing process.

6.5.3 ‘Common sense’ in cultural value transmission

After the launch of the Open Door policy in the late 1970s in China, the State reinforced the building of Chinese citizens’ ‘healthy and socialistic suitable value and world-view’. The Chinese State Council stated five factors as the targets of Basic Education: the development of students’ ‘moral, intelligence, physical condition, aesthetic and labour habits’. This national target has been adjusted several times, however, ‘moral development’ is always highly valued and considered as the priority in policy. In the most contemporary EFL curriculum, a few attempts are made to ensure children’s development of Chinese national identity and the continuation of Chinese culture.

As required by the national curriculum, all subjects take the responsibility of promoting Moral Education and there is no exemption. In Chinese education, as well as being an individual subject, Moral Education is included in other school subjects.

Patriotism is generally emphasized in the national curriculum. The EFL curriculum states clearly the importance of building national identity and promoting Chinese culture through English lessons, while the introduction of target culture is also encouraged.

The 2001 EFL curriculum reinforced the importance of cultural awareness in English language learning, and of the target culture of traditional English-speaking countries, such as the US and UK. In terms of details, the curriculum provided a range of cultural issues which should be covered in English lessons, such as food, sports, entertainments, national symbols, lifestyle and behaviours.

However, there are very few detailed criteria on the delivery of culturally related issues. As an important component of every culture, cultural values were neglected by the curriculum policy. Interviewee No.17 commented:

“In terms of the cultural section, not much information was mentioned in the EFL curriculum. It mentioned a little, such as symbolic buildings and festivals which we don't have in China.”

The 2001 EFL curriculum states that, it is important to ‘*help students to be aware of the cultural differences among nations in the world, especially the differences between Chinese culture and western culture*’. In the ‘cultural awareness’ section, ‘culture’ is defined as ‘history, geography, custom, lifestyle, literature and arts, code of conduct, social value and so on’ in English-speaking countries. Within the detailed descriptions for Primary Education, many cultural aspects of English-speaking countries are mentioned such as: greetings, the *most important* worldwide entertainment and sports, the *most common* drink and food in English-speaking countries, capitals and national flags of *main* English-speaking countries, symbolic buildings in *main* countries in the world and important holidays in English-speaking countries. At Primary Education level, culturally related issues mainly focus on the cultural product of English-speaking countries, especially developed western countries. Meanwhile, interviewees generally believe that, primary school aged

pupils are too young to learn about cultural values; therefore, as an issue ‘cultural values’ are not considered part of the textbook design. Interviewee No.1 mentioned:

“At Primary Educational level, as I mentioned earlier, the English language in Primary Education aims at raising pupils’ motivation and giving them a chance to get access to a foreign language and foreign culture... we would like to present a multi-cultural world in textbooks, in order to let students learn about children’s lives in other countries, such as their culture and their model of thinking. Of course, at Primary Educational level, it might be too early for children to know about values. So mostly, we introduce general cultures in textbooks.”

During the field work, key words such as ‘culture’, ‘value’, ‘ideology’ and ‘cultural value’ were frequently referred to. However, the interviewees did not necessarily share the same understanding of these terms. To most interviewees, ‘culture’ refers to the customs and behaviours of a group of people. The curriculum policy also shows this tendency. To clarify the focus on ‘culturally related issues’ at Primary Education, interviewee No.1 mentioned:

“At this stage, children are too young to fully understand values. Mostly, we introduce general culture such as famous places of interest.

.....we introduce general culture in textbooks, such as landmarks and main cities, for instance the Eiffel Tower, New York City and London.”

Interviewee No.17 also mentioned:

“... [Regarding cultural related issues]... our chief editor insisted that this volume of textbooks [PEP English] must contain information about manners in order to teach pupils how to behave in school and community.”

Meanwhile, ‘value’ links to attitude and ideology, which were carefully referred to by interviewees and seen as a sensitive topic in most cases of the textbook design for EFL subject in primary schools. Interviewee No.5 stated:

“EFL is a subject which can directly reflect western culture. For this reason, it is easier for articles in EFL textbooks to contain opinions, values and ideologies [than in other subjects].”

The concept of ‘culture values’, which in some cases is misinterpreted by educational administrators as ‘ideology’, did not draw much attention from the textbook and curriculum designers. When the researcher raised a question about cultural value related issues in textbooks, interviewee No.1 claimed the importance of delivering an ideologically appropriate and developmentally suitable knowledge to children through schooling.

“Things about ideology must be avoided [in textbooks]... I would say that, there are big differences between Chinese views and western views in terms of values, ideology and moral standards... textbooks must be adjusted or evaluated in terms of ideology. We can not afford to have any ideological mistake in textbooks.

... Ideology comes first. It might be possible to mention ideology in textbooks for Primary Education, but it has to be something approved by the Chinese government.”

What Chinese educators make perfectly clear is that, schooling works for the promotion of social control, which in this case is children’s development of national and political identity through education.

Although there is a blurred view of cultural value transmission in textbooks held by educators; the result of textbook analysis shows that cultural values, both western and eastern concepts, are clearly delivered through English textbooks as discussed in Chapter Five.

Editors and writers found it difficult to choose appropriate cultural information considering primary school aged pupils' limited language abilities. Cultural knowledge and cultural values are presented in a different way in textbooks. At the moment, two methods are used to present culture in textbooks; either cultural information is presented in a separate section, or it is embedded in the language knowledge teaching.

The culture of English-speaking countries is a main focus, although some major Asian countries or bilingual countries are also mentioned in textbooks. In terms of English-speaking countries, there is a preference for a few developed countries, such as the US, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, among educational administrators and editors/writers. Interviewee No.1 mentioned that:

“English language acts as a channel to get access to other culture in the world. Here ‘the world’ refers to the western world. Most of them are developed countries where people speak English...”

Interviewee No.8 said that

“Asian countries are considered a separate issue, because it is not easy to consider them as English-speaking countries, such as India and Singapore. So, in fact we would pay more attention to English-speaking countries.”

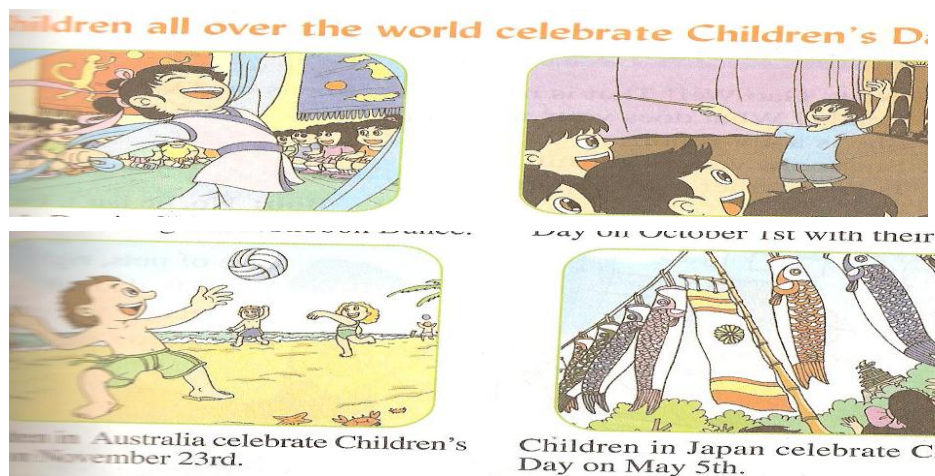
Cultural stereotyping occurs in the interpretation of world cultures in textbook design. As mentioned earlier, in the 2001 EFL curriculum, a few terms such as ‘the most important English-speaking country’, ‘the most important sports or entertaining activities in the world’, ‘the most popular drink’ and ‘the main English-speaking country’ were mentioned. How to define ‘the most important’ depends on the process of textbook design. In other words, it depends on how textbook editors/writers understand the world and how they interpret the culture of English-speaking countries. Interviewee No.17 made this very clear:

“... how culturally related issues are delivered in a textbook in China mainly depends on how the chief editor understands that culture and what he/she wants to emphasise in the books.”

Editors/writers summarized that, the decision making on ‘what cultural knowledge should be presented in textbooks’ was driven by (editors/writers’) ‘common sense’ and based on reliable references.

Such ‘common sense’ can be understood through the interpretation of target culture and the presentation of local culture by editors/writers. Firstly, as discussed in Chapter Five, the practice of ‘common sense’ can be found through the delivery of world culture in textbooks.

For example, there is a section on ‘national sports’ in the NV English (Picture 6.4). As discussed earlier, the term - ‘national sports’- implies the idea of national pride. In addition, in the content, it is arguable that what sport can represent each country. To some countries such as the United Kingdom, the existence of such a term is debatable, since people may have different views on their favourite sports. ‘Cricket’ is stated as the ‘national sport’ of the UK in NV English but apparently, football and rugby are also highly valued by British people. The question *‘how do you define the most important sports and the most common drink and food’* was raised during the interviews. Most Chinese interviewees’ responses were ‘common sense’; while, in practice, information was either based on their English-speaking partner’s recommendations or their own experiences and assumptions. However, following the example of ‘national sports’, such ‘common sense’ seems a generalization of world culture based on a Chinese perspective. It shows that the curriculum designers and textbook editors/writers interpreted the target culture and made assumptions within a Chinese context, based on Chinese cultural values and ‘common sense’.



(Picture 6.6)

A similar portrayal of world culture is also found in the section – “Children all over the world celebrate Children’s Day” (Picture 6.6). As discussed in Chapter Five, although Children’s Day is very important to Chinese children, it is in fact not a universal festival for children from many other countries. Here the editors/writers applied their ‘common sense’, which is generated in a Chinese context, and made assumptions on foreign culture.

6.6 Conclusion

A textbook does not only serve as the primary carrier of school knowledge to assist classroom teaching and learning; but also, it is an important means of social control and a platform for cultural reproduction.

In the case of China, the State plays a dominant role in educational policy or curriculum making as well as in the production of textbooks. On the surface, this process of textbook production, which is essentially a process of knowledge production and cultural reproduction, is under strict state control. However, in practice, autonomy is given to the real knowledge creators, the intellectuals. In other words, these middle class intellectuals' knowledge and cultural values are reproduced in national textbook production. The next chapter will take this viewpoint further and discuss the hidden spaces identified in the EFL curriculum making process.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion - Lacunae in EFL Curriculum Making

7.1 Introduction

This research began with issues concerning cultural values and their transmission through textbooks for English as foreign language in Chinese Primary Education. It explored the curriculum process and examined its impact on textbook production. This provided an opportunity to gain an insight into cultural reproduction in the context of Chinese Primary Education.

Two volumes of EFL textbooks were selected as samples and analysed in terms of the delivery of cultural values. Based on the initial findings, the researcher conducted a series of interviews and focus groups in order to trace the curriculum making process and textbook production for EFL subject. Participants include educational administrators in the Ministry of Education, curriculum designers, textbook editors/writers and English language teachers.

As noted in Chapter Three, due to the nature of foreign language learning, the importance of target culture is emphasised by educators (Corbett, 2003; Graddol, 2007). With the development of globalization in China, there is a growing need to bring foreign culture into local EFL classrooms. However, the research findings show that the introduction of a target culture experiences two restraints: a) official social control over ideology, values and culture; b) hidden challenges of local tradition and social culture.

Fundamentally, policy making in the Chinese educational system is guided by the philosophy of Confucius, who believed that a State should be ruled by moral norms rather than laws. One particular quality of the school curriculum which has been

recognized by the State is the ability to use it as a means for the transmission of ideological messages. Indeed, school curriculum, especially the EFL curriculum, is perceived as vehicles for Moral Education by policy makers and educators in China. For example, according to the research findings, aspects such as patriotism, respect and obedience, diligence, independence, and collectivism are intentionally delivered through textbook design.

The latter restraint is realized through use of editors/writers' 'common sense'²⁵ in the interpretation of foreign culture in EFL textbooks. To a large extent, editors/writers' 'common sense' is heavily used to design EFL textbooks, not only in the interpretation of foreign culture, but also in the reproduction of local culture. For example, the research findings show that, other cultural values, such as gender stereotypes and middle class or urban perspectives are also blended into EFL subject textbooks.

Both of these restraints indicate that, there are several 'key players' involved in curriculum and textbook design. Indeed, various agencies are involved in the curriculum making process, including the State, its agencies, and intellectuals. All of these players are not necessarily immediately noticeable. Their roles may be 'hidden' from sight. In fact, their position may constitute 'lacunae'. These are taken to be hidden spaces in the curriculum making process in Chinese Primary Education. It is therefore central to this research that the constructed lacunae – hidden spaces – have been discussed and delineated.

As we saw in Chapter Six, on the surface, curriculum policy making is under strict control as the State takes the lead through agenda making, selection of policy actors, and the production of policy texts. However, when recognizing textbook production as an important part of curriculum policy making, intellectuals are also heavily involved in the educational policy making process in China. In fact, these processes involve a State–Intellectual partnership, with intellectuals acting as curriculum

²⁵ This concept, 'common sense' was discussed in Chapter Six, page 118.

designers and textbook editors/writers. To be specific, these lacunae can be detected both at the level of curriculum design and textbook production.

This indicates other hidden spaces in educational policy making, in regard to knowledge and cultural reproduction. Taking on roles as curriculum designers, textbook editors/writers and censors, it should be recognized that intellectuals are the real practitioners of knowledge production and cultural reproduction. The researcher argues that, it is mainly the collective culture of the intellectuals that is reproduced through EFL subject in Chinese Primary Education. These lacunae are addressed in the following pages.

7.2 Policy-making for EFL curriculum: a State-Intellectual partnership

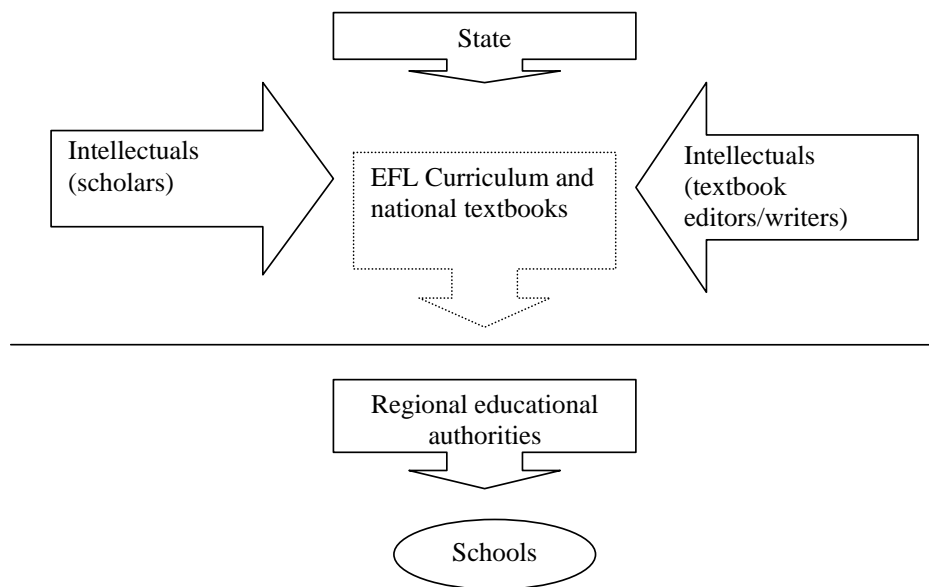
Before moving into a detailed discussion of the power dynamic in policy making, it is necessary to clarify the term ‘EFL curriculum making’ in the context of Chinese Primary Education. As addressed in Chapter Six, the policy making process of the 2001 EFL curriculum involves three steps: agenda/strategy making, curriculum design and textbook production. The researcher argues that, the production of textbooks in the context of Chinese Primary Education should be recognized as a part of the EFL curriculum policy making in China.

Every year, the MoE provides a list which contains approved textbooks. Regional educational authorities decide which volume of textbooks is suitable for schools in their areas. As mentioned earlier, regional educational authorities and local schools are not seen as being capable of designing their own curriculum. The research findings indicates that alongside serving as teaching materials, selected textbooks often work as the only ‘guidebook’ in many classrooms. In other words, a textbook also acts as a ‘content curriculum’ for EFL subject in primary schools.

In addition, the implementation of the 2001 EFL national curriculum reveals the nature of the EFL textbook in Chinese Primary Education. The 2001 EFL curriculum

is implemented through in-service trainings organized by the MoE, local educational institutions and textbook publishers. Book publishers normally hold training activities as a part of their customer service. As noted in Chapter Six, these trainings normally begin with an interpretation of the EFL curriculum, provided by book editors/writers. Here, a volume of textbooks is not only the primary carrier of English language knowledge, but also, it is used as an ‘official’ interpretation of the national curriculum.

Therefore, it is believed that several agencies are involved in the EFL curriculum making in China. They are the State, editors and writers in PEP and other publishers, scholars in universities and teachers. Political elites, as noted in Chapter Six, called for a national reformation in curriculum for Primary Education. Later, in 2000, the production of EFL curriculum and textbooks was organized by educational administrators in the Ministry of Education, as representatives of the State. The PEP is responsible for publishing the national curriculum and publishing textbooks; while other publishers are also authorised to design textbooks. Rather than assisting the PEP in curriculum and textbook production, scholars were involved in the 2001 EFL curriculum and textbook development in a larger degree. Teachers may be responsible for the writing of textbooks or providing feedback. All these scholars, textbook editors and writers in PEP and other publishers, and teachers can be considered as members of the intellectuals group. (Diagram 7.1: State-Intellectual Partnership)



On the surface, educational policy making remains a top-down approach in China. However, instead of being a straight top-down line led by the political elites, the educational policy making process in China contains a few intervals which make it rather complicated. Lacunae, these hidden spaces, are found for intellectuals – a side group in the policy process- to participate in knowledge production and cultural reproduction through education. Thus, the curriculum making processes involves a State–Intellectual partnership. Within the intellectual group, its members- scholars, editors/writers, and teachers- take different roles and may not hold equal amounts of power. This will be discussed in detail in the next sections.

7.3 The State’s leading role

To understand the roles of each player, it is necessary to start with how the 2001 EFL curriculum was created. With the development of more globalised education, attention from educators all over the world has been drawn to the nature of school curriculum. In China’s case, educators have always been seeking a better solution to improve the quality of teaching and learning in Basic Education. At the end of the

1990s, a discussion on the national curriculum was carried out among various agencies in the educational field, including policy makers, educators and parents.

Under these circumstances, a comprehensive educational reform was undertaken as of 1999. As noted in Chapter Two, a new national curriculum was eventually launched in 2001. As in many other countries, policy making in China starts with a top-down approach. The State takes the lead in the curriculum process through agenda making, selection of policy actors, and the production of policy text. As mentioned in Chapter Six, the original idea of this curriculum reform was promoted by policy makers, in particular, the vice-president at that time, Mr Li Lanqing. With his encouragement and a resolution for change, an educational conference was organised. Although there were different opinions on how the changes should be implemented, as an outcome of the conference, the Ministry of Education decided to call for the design of a new national curriculum which was suitable for international development in the 21st century.

Focusing on the policy making process, it can be seen that the policy making process was heavily controlled by political elites, especially in its early stages. In other words, the 2001 curriculum reform would not have been launched, or at least would not have been carried out so quickly, without promotion from political elites. Despite educators' concerns about the inequality of educational development between regions in China, the central government pursued a nationwide movement regardless of these issues.

As noted in the literature review in Chapter One, a policy network often exists in the contemporary policy making process. It offers opportunities for grassroots actors to participate in the policy making process. This might be construed as a way in which the central government seeks 'partners' to share any problems resulting from policy implementation. China is not exempt from this. If we consider educators as members of grassroots groups, before making a concrete decision in 2001, they were consulted by the Chinese government, in terms of the possible options for developing a new EFL curriculum.

In this sense, these experts did participate in the initial stage of policy making; however, to what extent their voices were taken into account is rather doubtful. Experts did voice their unease about the development of EFL teaching in Primary Education throughout the country and the potential difficulties of introducing English lessons to primary schools in less developed areas in China. However, despite all these considerations, the policy makers decided to promote a nationalised movement to introduce EFL subject into all primary schools and improve the existing quality of teaching. We may not be able to say that those concerns raised by experts, as policy feedback, were ignored by political elites. Policy makers explained their rationale for this reform as a ‘long-term development plan of China’, which means ‘temporary difficulties may exist’ but they will be overcome. However, feedback was not made open, possibly, for the purpose of avoiding the public expression of negativity. To a large extent, it kept teachers and parents away from the policy making process.

The research findings outlined in Chapter Six show that it is clear that teachers from less developed areas in China hold different opinions from those in more developed areas on the 2001 EFL curriculum. As it also noted in Chapter Six, there is a lack of qualified teaching resources in less developed areas in China for EFL subject in Primary Education. Teachers from less developed areas also identify the gap between the content of EFL curriculum and the reality of their students’ lives. However, these teachers’ voices were not heard by policy makers, either at the time this research was conducted or when a decision on national curriculum reform was made. Some teachers were involved in the later stage of curriculum making – textbook design- as writers or feedback providers. However, they were mainly in charge of evaluating whether certain activities designed in textbooks were practical and could be carried out in classrooms.

Chinese political elites won this ‘competition’ by providing an educational strategy that catered to their priorities about the apparent and urgent need to arm Chinese citizens with competent English language skills. This is seen as an important step in ensuring for the country an advantageous position in the future globalised world. Here, the benefit for the State as a whole was the focus, while, as noted in Chapter

Six, the benefit of people in less developed areas was to some extent sacrificed. The concept of 'State' and its wellbeing are highly emphasised as priorities. This is representative of the discourse that Chinese policy makers follow in decision making.

Indeed, as Ball (1990) has argued, policy making is not always rational as policy makers' personal values may have some impact on the policy process. That is to say, 'personal value', as a constructed discourse of a certain group is influenced by historical, social and political contexts. As noted earlier, the discourse that emerged in the policy making for EFL curriculum in China clearly prioritises the benefit of the State.

Historically speaking, such a discourse is embedded in traditional Chinese culture. As noted in Chapter Five, in Chinese culture, social members are not perceived as independently acting individuals, but members of social groups. Although social class structure may shift over a period in China; it does not change the 'Gemeinschaft'²⁶ nature into which one becomes a member through the natural process of birth and growth within a family and a community. Traditionally, one is required to follow the rules set out for citizens and to keep relationships balanced. However, when the wellbeing of one group conflicts with another, one is normally encouraged to put the needs of the larger group first. Therefore, in Chinese culture, individual welfare is normally the last thing to be considered.

In this sense, the State is recognized as a bigger group by political elites, compared to which, any other group in China is considered less important. The researcher argues that, the creation of a 'large-small' relationship, which precipitates an 'important-less important' power position, distracted citizens from exploring the nature of the State as the representative of dominant group(s). In China's case, although the Socialist State claims that the people's interests are the top priority, it is rather clear that, only limited opportunities were offered to grassroots groups in the initial decision making process. By identifying this 'initial decision making process', in which power elites made their calls on a national reformation, the researcher argues

²⁶ As a sociological term, Gemeinschaft is defined as a world characterized chiefly by a strong sense of common identity, common traditions and close personal relationships (Scollon and Scollon, 1995).

that the rest of the curriculum making process may tell a different story. Due to the State's leading role in initial decision making, it is apparent that EFL curriculum making does not follow a bottom-up approach. However, there were lacunae – hidden spaces- for a side group, the intellectuals, especially scholars and textbook editors/writers to actively participate in EFL curriculum making.

7.4 Scholars: curriculum designers

As we can see, the idea of promoting national curriculum reform was supported strongly by all political elites in China. The State was heavily involved in the early stage of decision making on this issue, in terms of strategy making and agenda setting. However, the power of designing a curriculum was shifted down the line. Taking the EFL subject in Chinese Primary Education as an example, the actual curriculum design task was not completed in the MoE. To a large extent, the MoE acts as an administrative organization for curriculum design activities. In other words, the curriculum in detail (e.g. syllabi) was created by other groups with differing interests. This is exceptionally important as it allows a 'hidden policy space', a lacuna, to develop in which actual curriculum design is conducted.

The researcher argues that the agenda of curriculum reform was unrealistic. In terms of the curriculum change itself, as educators warned, a standardised national movement did not suit the unequally developed EFL curriculum in Chinese Primary Education. As noted in Chapter Six, this 2001 EFL curriculum was radical since some less developed areas did not have enough teaching resources to introduce the EFL subject in schools. On the other hand, a similar resources problem occurred at both the policy making and implementation stages. To some extent, the actual policy making process deviates from its original intention. In a way, this led to the shift of power from the State to the intellectual group.

Owing to a lack of human resources to design a new EFL curriculum, the MoE invited about 100 experts from the English teaching field. Most of these experts were scholars in higher educational institutions. Some of them were experienced teacher

trainers or textbook editors/writers. Although the designing activities were organized by the MoE, the 2001 EFL curriculum was designed by intellectuals from universities, rather than the government or its agencies. The State retained control over the evaluation and publication of the national curriculum; however, one should say that, the national curriculum was designed by these educators rather than civil servants in the MoE. In other words, the curriculum was designed by intellectuals rather than politicians or other ruling groups. In this case, the national curriculum which carries the responsibility for the production of official knowledge was not created by power elites, such as politicians or establishment intellectuals, but by non-governmental intellectuals in China.

For the implementation of 2001 EFL curriculum, there is a lack of human resources in local educational authorities and schools. This leads to what the researcher argued earlier in this chapter, the design of EFL textbooks should be considered as a part of curriculum policy making, since these textbooks are used as content standards for the curriculum in classrooms. Apart from schools in Shanghai, this 2001 EFL curriculum which was designed outside the MoE is the only national structural standard used throughout China. Most provincial educational authorities were not able to design their own curriculum content standards. This task was in fact handed over to the textbook designers. Therefore, once again, the responsibility of curriculum policy making was shifted down the line to textbook editors/writers. This presents another hidden space in the EFL curriculum policy making process.

7.5 Textbook editors and writers

As mentioned in Chapter Six, the production of a national EFL textbook is completed through a four-step process including: 1) project approval, 2) design, 3) censorship and 4) the publishing of textbook. According to related regulations, to begin a textbook design project, it has to be approved by the State Textbooks Examination and Approval Committee (STEAC). It can only be published once it has been examined and approved by the same committee in terms of ideological content, scientific spirit and adaptability to classroom instruction.

On the surface, textbook production is regulated by the government, as the MoE organizes the approval of textbook development and textbook censorship. However, again, although the MoE sets the agenda, each ‘governmental’ action is actually fulfilled by intellectuals. In this case, they are mainly scholars in universities. STEAC, which is responsible for the project approval and textbook censorship, consists of educators from Higher Education and research institutions, experienced teaching professionals and textbook editors/writers in Basic Education.

In terms of step two – ‘textbook design’, is led by the national curriculum in principle. The 2001 EFL curriculum contains a brief guideline for textbook design, alongside other components, such as principles, aims, content, outcomes, pedagogy and assessment. Various volumes of textbooks were produced to meet the criteria of the 2001 EFL curriculum. However, even so, there was a large space left to editors/writers due to the lack of detailed guidelines for textbook design.

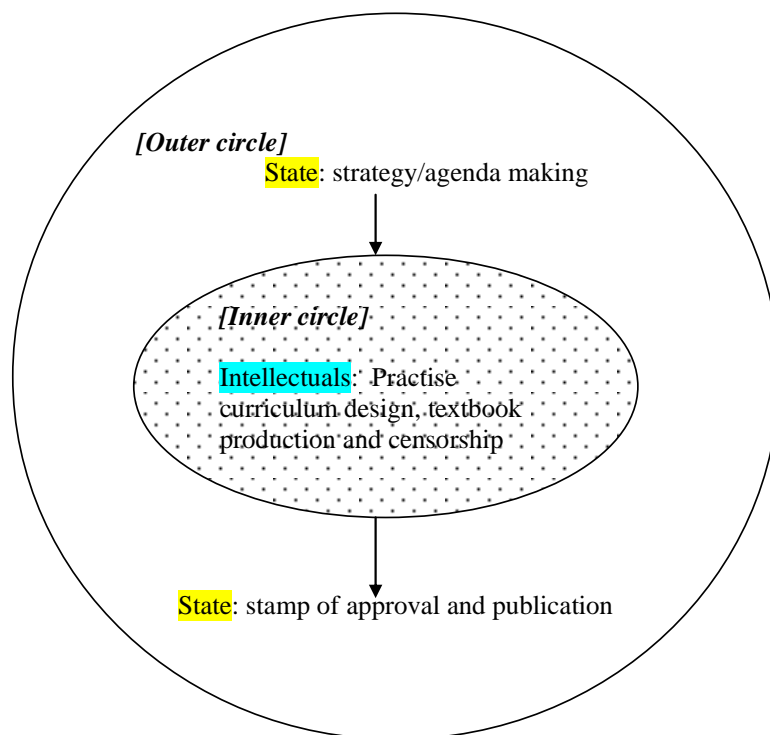
Most curriculum designers were heavily involved in textbook production as chief editors or textbook censors. Research findings show that if a curriculum designer did not participate in textbook design, he or she would be a member of textbook censorship in most cases. To a large extent, the principles of the 2001 EFL curriculum were delivered in textbook design by these curriculum designers. Chief Editors mainly participate in the creation of a framework for a textbook design project. Here, considering textbook design as a part of curriculum making process, the power of policy making was once again shifted to another group – the textbook editors and writers. They are mainly Chinese and foreign publishers; while some teachers were also involved in the designing activities to be used in EFL classrooms. However, as mentioned in Chapter Six, there was no training regarding the curriculum provided to textbook editors and writers. In this way, a great deal of autonomy was left to textbook editors and writers to deal with the interpretation of EFL curriculum and the construction of knowledge for schooling.

In other words, it was editors and writers who transferred the principles of the EFL national curriculum into the practical teaching guides – known as textbooks in

China's case. By the end of textbook production, this group also have the responsibility to interpret the national curriculum when introducing their products. Acting as representatives of publishers, these editors and writers normally provide textbook training events to teachers to promote new textbooks as a part of their customer service.

The intellectual group in China was heavily involved in the curriculum policy making process. They act as curriculum designers, textbook editors/writers and textbook censors in the process. In a way, the intellectual group worked in partner with the State, within a framework where the State remains the 'overarching' leader.

(Diagram 7.2: Curriculum policy making process)



The curriculum policy making process in Chinese Primary Education can be evaluated according to the model above. The State established an ‘empty box’ (outer circle) by setting up strategies and agendas at the early stage of curriculum policy making. It also influences the end of this policy making process through policy approval and publication. On the other hand, the practice of curriculum design and textbook production is carried out by the intellectuals, who practically fill in the ‘box’ (inner circle). Both curriculum design and textbook production have to work within the state controlled framework. However, to some extent, the inner circle is rather independent from the outer one, in terms of communication and rulemaking.

This model shows that, working alongside the State and its representatives, the intellectuals hold hidden power in the curriculum policy making process in Chinese Primary Education. The relationship between other power elites (including politicians, militaries and state bureaucracies) and intellectuals (as elites with cultural capital) has changed over time. In the past, gaining cultural capital was the only way for the general public to climb up the ‘ladder’ to maintain a position in the ruling class. In contemporary China, intellectuals have engaged in several major social and political transformations, which were heavily influenced by ideological changes. As the group associated with ‘knowledge, values and meaning’, intellectuals actualize social mobility, allowing the public to enter the power group. Apart from being a bridge group, in the case of EFL curriculum creation in Chinese Primary Education, intellectuals actually hold more power in policy making than originally expected. In a way, they form the middle layer of a power pyramid in policy making, between the State maintaining its position at the top level and the grassroots group (including most classroom teachers and parents) who stay at the bottom.

In contrast to Broadhead’s (2002) concept of ‘collaboration and consultation’, in the case of the EFL curriculum in Chinese Primary Education, a partnership between political elites and intellectuals was formed for curriculum policy making. Overall, the State takes the lead in establishing the curriculum creation process by setting an agenda, selecting participant groups and publishing policy. The State or the political elites’ values are reproduced through the discourse of strategy making; meanwhile, a

large space is left to another agency – the intellectual group – to explore. The intellectual group does participate in policy process alongside the State. However, it does not change the nature of policy making as mainly a reproduction of values of the ruling group. However, to a large extent, the responsibility of curriculum interpretation, as well as the power of knowledge production is handed over to textbook editors/writers.

Although the political elites called for a nationwide curriculum reform and set up the policy agenda, only very limited human capital can be offered to the curriculum design project within the government. To a large extent, during the curriculum and textbook design, the State only retains control in the administration of curriculum policy making through its representatives, the Ministry of Education. In this case, the power was shifted to educators and editors/writers, known as the intellectual group, to design and interpret the national curriculum for Primary Education. In other words, the intellectual group hold the power over knowledge and culture reproduction in EFL subject. As noted in Chapter Five, such a power was found in the portrayal of ‘hidden messages of cultural values’ in EFL textbooks. In a way, these hidden messages can be understood as the interpretation of ‘state control over education’ and ‘foreign culture’.

7.5.1 State control over education and intellectuals’ autonomy

The 2001 curriculum reformation clarified the central position of students’ development in education and constructed a system of educational objectives to bring about ‘the renaissance of the Chinese nation and the comprehensive development of individuals’. This national curriculum states the aims of education in China as the ‘development of a new generation with lofty ideals, moral integrity, good education and a strong sense of discipline’, which can be fulfilled through Basic Education in moral, intelligence, physical and aesthetic factors (PEP, 2001).

Similar to the previous version, the 2001 national curriculum reinforces the importance of 'Moral Education' in schooling. The focus of Moral Education remained in 'patriotism, collectivism and socialist ideals', alongside other tasks aiding the development of students' self-esteem, self-reliance and self-strengthening. It is rather clear that, as an individual, a young person's 'self-concept' is relatively under-emphasised, compared to his or her social identity. Students' social obligations as socialist successors inheriting Chinese traditions are highly emphasized, alongside being a responsible citizen in a modern democratic society. To a large extent, students are encouraged to recognize themselves as members of groups. In a way, it shows the impact of the political elites' discourse in which the group's benefit is prioritised above individual wellbeing.

Hidden spaces are found between this ideological control over education and textbook design, since in fact autonomy is offered to Chinese editors/writers in terms of the design of textbook content. Although the 2001 national curriculum has to be followed throughout the four-step textbook development process, no detailed guidance was provided for textbook editors and writers. In a sense, although political elites and educational administrators draw the outlines for textbook development, the actual work is dominated by Chinese editors/writers, who are representatives of the intellectual group, as well as middle class. Therefore, it can be concluded that, it is this intellectual group's culture which was reproduced in Chinese Primary Education through textbook design.

The results of textbook analysis show strong emphasis on delivering Moral Education through EFL subject. However, in terms of Moral Education, the key concepts that emerged in English Language textbooks differ from the ones that were promoted by the MoE. For example, 'patriotism', which appears as the priority of Moral Education, is delivered in EFL textbooks in a rather hidden way through the use of images and narratives involving national symbols. Although a sense of 'national identity' appears in textbooks, it is mainly transmitted through cultural symbols such as 'places of interests', 'customs' and 'local food'. Editors/writers expressed doubt about the necessity of delivering this rather 'theoretical' term of

‘patriotism’ to children at primary school age. Meanwhile, the concept of ‘collectivism’ appeared in EFL textbooks, while ‘socialist ideal’ was avoided by editors/writers. The former was referred to by editors/writers as promoting the spirit of ‘team work’ or the approach of collaborative learning. Besides core moral concepts emphasised by the MoE, other cultural values, such as diligence, independence, respect/obedience, and stereotyped gender roles were transferred through EFL textbooks. Overall, EFL textbooks demonstrate middle class and urban tendencies. As noted in Chapter Six, textbook editors/writers and censors, as key players in the curriculum designing process, rely heavily upon their ‘common sense’ in the task of textbook design. In fact, such ‘common sense’ represents the shared culture of their social group – the intellectuals. In a way, it is the intellectual group’s culture that is reproduced through the EFL curriculum in Chinese Primary Education.

The EFL subject closely relates to the culture of English-speaking countries. It is indicated that, not only in the reproduction of local culture, the intellectuals’ ‘common sense’ also plays a vital role in the interpretation of foreign culture.

7.5.2 Flow of foreign culture and Chinese editors/writers’ interpretation

A foreign culture automatically passes through a ‘digesting process’ as soon as it enters a local context. For students who are learning English in China, they are not often directly exposed to the target culture. A foreign culture presented in the classroom tends to be an interpretation constructed by several agencies, such as curriculum designers, textbook editors/writers (Chinese and foreign) and teachers.

Based on the 2001 national curriculum, changes were made to the EFL curriculum in primary schools. In this curriculum, culture is recognised as an important productive reference point for social interaction. It is recognized that, the introduction of a foreign culture contributes to creating cross-regional or cross-national understanding.

Meanwhile, potentially, a certain local culture may be reproduced through the spread of information.

This 2001 EFL curriculum targets the comprehensive improvement of students' intercultural communicative competence. More efforts were made to develop pupils' culture awareness. Compared to the previous policies, the 2001 EFL curriculum provided a clearer definition of 'culture', and a set of relatively detailed descriptions on the goal of the development of students' cultural awareness. In particular, the importance of getting a better insight into western cultures has been highly recognized in language learning.

On the other hand, education administrators and educators have recognized the potential side effect of 'importing foreign culture' or at least allowing the care-free flow of a foreign culture into a Chinese local context. However, they are generally confident, that the traditional Chinese culture will manage to remain in its dominant position in Chinese society, since students are learning English in China. Indeed, the flow of foreign culture is restrained by the strict social control system in China, such as censorship over publications.

A large number of cultural issues were added in new textbooks, such as costumes, foods, sports, entertainments, national symbols and lifestyles. As we know, not all foreign culture can be included in EFL teaching. It was addressed in the 2001 EFL curriculum that students should be exposed to culture of 'major English-speaking country' or 'the most substantial culture of a certain foreign country'. However, in terms of the indicators of evaluating such a 'major country' or 'substantial culture', there are no criteria provided. As mentioned in Chapter Six, this is where 'common sense' is applied. In a way, the task of selecting and delivering foreign cultural messages was handed to EFL textbook editors and writers.

Today, it is common that a national EFL textbook is produced with the cooperation of a local Chinese publisher and a foreign press. However, a national EFL textbook can only be published by a Chinese press following a series of procedures. It is

perceived as a means for the State to maintain its control over media and publishing. However, as noted in Chapter Six, these Chinese publishers are given power in choosing their partners, as there are no regulations for evaluating the eligibility of a foreign publisher. Meanwhile, as indicated in Chapter Six, the Chinese textbook publishers take the lead in their co-operation with foreign publishers, in terms of framework making and product evaluation. For example, based on the 2001 national curriculum's requirements in terms of the importance of Moral Education, Chinese editors/writers decided to create 'role models' for children to encourage them to adopt expected behaviours in the context of Chinese society. Meanwhile, textbooks are also carefully examined in light of government approved ideology during the censorship procedure.

To a large extent, Chinese editors/writers applied their 'common sense' in the interpretation of foreign culture. As noted in Chapter Four, this local interpretation of foreign culture can be found in textbooks. Also, as discussed in Chapter Six, editors/writers believe that, it is possible to apply their 'common sense' to select cultural knowledge in textbook production.

7.6 Conclusion

This research started with an examination of national EFL textbook production in Chinese Primary Education, in terms of cultural value transmission. It looked into how a certain culture is reproduced through an investigation of the power dynamics between key players involved in the curriculum policy making process.

This policy making process remains a top-down approach, where the State maintains power by setting the agenda. As shown in diagram 7.1, however, within the framework created by the State and its agencies, the intellectual group retains a great deal of autonomy. Although they do not normally hold political power, these elites with cultural capital maintain their control over knowledge and cultural reproduction through these spaces of hidden power in China. To some extent, EFL textbooks used in Chinese schools reflect the influence of foreign culture. It has been identified that, the flow of foreign culture is restrained by local social culture as a result of intellectuals' 'common sense'.

This may be a temporary situation as more human capital may be invested into the educational field by the State in the future, enabling more 'establishment intellectuals' to participate in the policy making process.

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APPENDIX 1

Interview topic guide- Educational Administrators and Curriculum Designers

(1) Personal information (career, travel overseas etc.)

(2) Role of various divisions within MoE

·DBE One & Two, NCCT, Office of Moral education for primary and junior secondary schools, Division of curriculum development and Division of textbook management.

·Cooperation, overlap

(3) EFL subject in curriculum

(Does not apply to interviews with directors of moral education)

·Role of EFL subject

·Target of English teaching (provide policy documents)

·Reasons for promoting EFL subject

· Process of EFL curriculum design

·Detailed questions regarding EFL curriculum:

‘...awareness of world culture...awareness of the cultural differences between China and the western world....’and ‘...the most important ...’ etc

(Policy document provided)

(4) Textbook design and censorship

·Regulation, process

·Censorship

·Cooperation with international publishers

(5) Cultural values in EFL curriculum

·Define ‘*cultural values*’, ‘*Chinese cultural values*’ and ‘*western cultural values*’

·Plans for promotion of cultural values, competition between Chinese and other cultural values?

·Themes:

Philosophy of education, patriotism, respect and obedience, diligence, independence, collectivism and gender role

(Defining the plan for promotion cultural values)

(6) EFL subject and Moral Education

·Relationship (i.e. relationship between cultural issues in EFL subject and Moral Education

·How to understand the role of EFL subject in Moral education in PRC?

APPENDIX 2

Interview Topic Guide- Textbook Editors and Writers

(1) Personal information (age, background etc)

(2) Process of textbook development

·Why this model (cooperation with international publishers, benefits and drawbacks, difference between textbooks developed in various models)

·Why Lingo Media or SNP?

· Process of textbook design

·Role of publishers (Chinese & International), authors, editors, teachers, students and MoE

·Interaction between local and international publishers (cooperation, communication, competition and conflict), differences in working style, expectations etc.

· Process of censorship

(3) Plan for cultural value transmission

·Plan (what to promote, what to prevent?)

·Difference in various grades

·Themes: *Philosophy of education, patriotism, respect and obedience, diligence, independence, collectivism and gender role* (examples given)

(Definition of each term and why, plans for promoting these themes)

·Explanation of specific examples in textbook (decision making process, purpose etc)

·Errors (eg. Children's day in Japan)

·Image design (process and purpose, with examples given)

APPENDIX 3

Interview Topic Guide- Teachers

(1) Personal background (Age, education, career experience etc.)

(2) Career background (Years, which grade)

(3) EFL in schools (Teaching time etc)

(4) Textbook in use (Which volume, teaching training)

(5) Changes (positive & negative)

(6) Textbook users' opinions on textbook design

-style,

-format,

-image,

-colour,

-information

-and linguistic knowledge

(7) Sections of cultural values in EFL textbooks (teaching plans, children's feedback etc.)

(8) Suggestions and expectations

APPENDIX 4: Sample of a Complete Coding Sheet

Themes	Sample of Coding
Cultural values	<p>[No8] It (introducing foreign culture in EFL subject) must affect the learning of Chinese culture, but it is rather nature and unavoidable. Culture contact will definitely lead to culture shock; and one culture will impact on the learning of the other one. However, we believe that, it is meaningless to have a culture contact without culture shock. The variety and differences between cultures lead to the production of culture shock. It is necessary to keep cultural variety because human beings will eventually lose the abilities to be creative. Thus, we believe that it is important to have a world wide sight to view Chinese culture. We know that there are many valuable heritages in Chinese history and culture, however, these are also some “old wives tales” or traditions which act as restrictions for the development of China in the current era. The aim of introducing English language to all Chinese pupils is not training them to say “hello”, but helping them to build the worldwide sight to allow them to get access to and experience foreign cultures and to realise the differences between cultures. At least children should get chances to know that “it is okay to be different and there are always alternatives”.</p> <p>... Thus we consider how to introduce which culture is <u>suitable</u> for the development of Chinese society to pupils. It does not mean that we hope all cultures come to China because not all cultures are positive. Even if we bring in all positive cultures from other countries, it is impossible for Chinese people to take them all in. We have our own cultural background which is unchangeable. Based on such a cultural background, what do we want to change? So China should have its <u>own</u> cultural strategy or at least be aware of how to <u>import foreign culture</u>. <u>We can't say that our ideology is the same as the official ideology, because it is not easy to find a written list of official ideology. But we know that we should do to evaluate a certain culture regarding if it is positive.</u></p> <p>Analysis: <i>These two responses contrast with themselves. On one hand, the interviewee expresses the importance of introducing various cultures; on the other hand, he said it is necessary to protect Chinese culture, and strategy of choosing foreign culture. This response also reveals that, as curriculum designers/editors, these practitioners have their autonomy on cultural transmission.</i></p>
Textbook design	<p>[No8] So we think, Chinese children may be spoiled by their parents. Chinese children should be more responsible in terms of kinship. Today, when we make principles for governmental leaders, obligation to parents/family is always emphasised. Why is it always included in principles? Because we think there are problems regarding this issue (kinship). So we think it is necessary to emphasise this in our textbooks. Also we may present different thinking strategy to pupils.</p> <p>Analysis: <i>Considering the role of this interviewee as both a curriculum designer and a</i></p>

Comment [p1]: Attitude towards foreign culture.

Comment [p2]: Attitude towards foreign culture.

Comment [p3]: Awareness and influence of the exiting 'official ideology'.

Comment [p4]: Attitude towards local culture.

Comment [p5]: As curriculum designers.

Comment [p6]: Use of 'first person' and 'active voice sentence' to express the interviewee's subjective opinion.

Comment [p7]: As textbook editors. Transferring curriculum into textbook design.

	chief editor, this paragraph implies his power in transferring curriculum policy into textbook design.	
Textbook censorship	<p>[No9] (in terms of the censorship) We could evaluate the topic, the content, in terms of whether it delivers healthy content, layout design, word size, whether they are good for children eye sight, whether the content is suitable for children' cognitive level, the stereotype of social characters need to be avoided, if it delivers a comprehensive topic, such as healthy diet, first aid, obey the rules, helping others, these should not be as preaching, but being emerged in the delivery of language knowledge.</p> <p>There are two groups of people dealing with censorship and design, the textbook design is based on curriculum. There is no standard for textbook design; it is a 'test' for editors in terms of their understanding of the curriculum, and their understanding of teaching and pupils.</p> <p>Analysis: This interview clarifies the function of textbook censorship and how it is operated. According to this response, there is no clear regulation for textbook design or textbook censorship.</p>	<p>Comment [p8]: Attitude towards local culture, curriculum designers/censors</p> <p>Comment [p9]: Interpretation of cultural value</p> <p>Comment [p10]: Communication between policies: editor's autonomy</p>
Co-operation between local and international editors	<p>[No21] So to our partnership, we tried to, to make sure that we gave our views, but we knew for sure that the Beijing the Ministry of Education and PEP (press) have some guidelines to follow, so this is how the partnership worked.</p> <p>Analysis: It shows the clear power dynamic in the China-international cooperation, where Chinese press takes the lead. International editors would give their views, working as consultants; their views may or may not be taken into account. On the other hand, the Chinese editors need to work within an existing framework; their decision making may be restrained by other policies.</p>	<p>Comment [p11]: Power of Chinese press over international press</p> <p>Comment [p12]: Transferring policy/curriculum into textbook design</p>
Illustrations	<p>[No21] I think sometimes we try to do that through the illustration, because you learn a lot though pictures too. There are pictures out there, I think they would demonstrate and represent that what we would want and have for children. So they would see from pictures another kind of model.</p> <p>R: Why did you put 10 dollars instead of Chinese money?</p> <p>S: That would be a Chinese decision; we didn't have any control over the art.</p> <p>R: You mean the pictures or images?</p> <p>S: Yes, we didn't have control over that, so we had very little control over the art, we tried, we worked very hard, we had an excellent Canadian artist at the beginning, but we knew that we were working with the Chinese publishers, there will be editors that have to give it to artists, and when the artists is done, they will go back to the editor, and the publisher will make the final decision. But we didn't have much control of the art, from the Canadian point of view. So your question about why that was 10</p>	<p>Comment [p13]: Awareness of the use of illustration</p> <p>Comment [p14]: Cooperation between Chinese and international publishers</p>

	<p>dollars and wasn't Chinese money, we could recommend it, but they can make a decision.</p> <p><i>Analysis: It shows the model of cooperation between Chinese and international publisher, where the Chinese publisher takes the lead.</i></p>	<p>Comment [p15]: Planned or unplanned cultural value transmission</p>
Curriculum design	<p>[No8] Before the launch of the current curriculum, the Ministry of Education established an “internal) framework for education reform which didn't literally mention cross-cultural education. However, until now, in the designing process of this “2010 outline”, now we can see a complete term as cross cultural education already. Thus, it may be an important part of the educational policy in the future. Or it may also be adjusted in the emendation process, if some leaders consider this term as inappropriate. But what we can see is, it is positive for the “cross cultural education” to be a part of education in China.</p> <p><i>Analysis: It gives the idea of a top-down policy making approach, and describes the power of leaders.</i></p>	<p>Comment [p16]: Rational of education policy making.</p>
Education reform	<p>[No8] During the implementation of curriculum reform many problems that we have at the moment were caused by the lack of “policy awareness” and the consideration of the cost of promoting a new policy. For example the MoE didn't provide enough funding on the teaching training for new curriculum. However, publishers were encouraged to provide teaching training in terms of curriculum changes. So publishers may interpret the same curriculum differently in order to promote/sell their own products. This may lead to the misinterpretation of curriculum which is rather a serious problem.</p> <p><i>Analysis: A gap in the implementation appears here. It shows the limited communication between the MoE and publishers. However, the dual role of some curriculum designers, who might also involve in textbook design, is not mentioned, while explaining the process of how curriculum is used in textbook design. It made the researcher doubt the efficiency of the transformation of curriculum.</i></p>	<p>Comment [p17]: Transferring policy into practice.</p>

APPENDIX 5: Interview Sample 1

Researcher: R, Interviewee: S

R: You know, 7 years ago, Lingo Media worked with the People's Educational Press and published a textbook which is called PEP Primary. I use that textbook as one of my cases. My interview questions will cover two dimensions. The first one is the "process of this textbook, how was it developed"; the second one is the "plan of cultural value transmission in this textbook".

S: Right, Ok. Umm, how are you going to get the information, are you tape recording or taking notes.

R: Do you mind if I tape record?

S: It doesn't matter to me.

R: That's great!

S: That's fine, that's fine. We were approached in Canada to be a consulting team for this project and developed the material. So my colleges from the University David Booth, and Jake Booth who is a language instructor, and myself we worked as a team to be the representative for Canada. Because we were experts in language programming. So we partner with a team in Beijing, from Madam Ma and Madam Zhang who were the leader team, and so first we had a meeting in Beijing for one week, and then they came to Canada, so we had a meeting very often to develop the programme. And the beginning, we talked about our philosophy, in our philosophy we would like our kids/students to have a real experiences authentic use of language, and you know to give some interesting stories to children, because that's the world we would like to use the skills in context. We knew the challenges, this is a beginner programme, they had vocabulary development programme to be concern with and simple language patterns, so we knew the challenges that we were facing. And of course China has some programmes in development not with PEP, so they use those models, so we looked at models as other programmes, and decided how ours could be different, and how ours could be better. So to our partnership, we tried to, to make sure that we gave our views, but we knew for sure that the Beijing the Ministry of Education and PEP (press) have some guidelines to follow, so this is how the partnership worked. At the early stages to begin, we needed a framework for the programme, so it's going to be how many chapters, how many books, and then in each chapter what would be consistent, because we know that teachers need a framework, we know that the publisher needs a framework. And we, I would say Madam Zhang and Madam Ma has very precise things that they knew that they needed, because they knew the teachers and they knew what the curriculum initiates and mandates, the curriculum, so they had a framework in mind, we were trying to give our opinion and negotiate. Ok? So that's how we developed the framework for the PEP books, and I don't have it in front of me, but you may know a bit more familiar about it, you know we introduce (new knowledge), how we have talking

activity, writing activity, story, so that took sometime till we came up with what we wanted. Then we knew the themes that you know when you wanted “food”, and when you wanted “animal”, when you wanted “colours”, because these are something that are common to language learning. So we organized things, we were very clear on the vocabulary that they had to teach, and they had to make it simple, but we also wanted to make it fun. But also, you know a bit different; it is not just words, but lots of poems, lots of speaking, they were very concerned about active literacy, what the kids act out. My background and David’s background is in drama, so we were able to talk about that, so active literacy. You know total physical, what do they call that TPR, those are things that we needed to find out what they needed, and then they also wanted to learn from us, what we believed in. So it was a sort of acclimation. As it developed, we knew that there were some restrictions, we knew that what would work for English language learning programming, would not always work for teachers in Beijing who were inexperienced, and so we had to compromise, we had to negotiate, but then in the end, I think the team was pleased with what they had, and then they were working in Beijing with teachers, they worked very hard to find out what the teachers needed, they were doing some writing, then I went to Beijing several times and I was a consultant, and I would do chants. I wrote many chants, and very simple stories. I try to have some conversation, little plays you know so the talk part, so I was a consultant of that. I think I went to Beijing maybe 7 or 8 times. I met teachers. I worked with them and then they had another team come over. Jane and Mary, I worked with a lot from one district, they were great, the teachers were fantastic. They were piloting. They were trying out the materials with teachers. At the end of the process, you know there was a moving from I can’t remember from how many books, 8 books in the series? You know they had to start from grade 3 and move up, so we were able to have a little bit more sophisticated things, as we got sophisticated in the culture that we were introducing, sophisticated in the vocabulary, but we knew that we still needed to follow the framework, at this time, there was little negotiation because the teachers had to do what they were asked. And there was also discussion about the art you know. We try to have two characters, the bear and the squirrel that was a lot of fun. As they listened to our ideas, but they were restricted by the framework. So that’s how the programme got developed, because they knew what their teachers needed, but we wanted to bring some current philosophies about language and the understanding of how we should teach English language learning ESL in Canada. But it is different than EFL, English as first language; we knew that, so we talked to experts about teaching second languages, and they were interested in our views, so that’s how the programme got developed.

R: Was there any student involved in?

S: mm, nah, young students or teacher students?

R: Young students.

S: No, they were just piloting the programme. So, I visited a couple of classrooms. But the teachers were using the programmes in one district. I am sorry I don’t know the name of the district. It was near my hotel. I stayed in Youyi Bingguan.

R: Oh, yeah. I think that's in...

S: The school was about 10 minutes, 15 minutes from there. That's where they consulted Mary. This piloting, the students were giving questions. They were showing that the programme worked very successfully, for teachers and for students.

R: So that was before the publishing of the textbooks?

S: Sometimes, at the same time, because we were working for different grades.

R: Ok. About the framework, I mean the Chinese authors; they know what topics need to be put in?

S: They know about the topics, they also know how much time the teacher has in classroom, that's something which is not as a restriction but we all had no control over when writing a programme. e.g How much time they can spend on it. So we knew how to break unit, in unit each of the sections down, and the headings, I don't have it in front of me, I am sorry, the headings they have used, we had a control about, so the teacher taught two or three lessons in one day, and another day and review and evaluation in another day. So that was very, not limiting, but the framework about what needed to be written. From my point of view, we couldn't go outside of that box, we couldn't be creative. They wanted us to be creative, and sometimes we were too creative. We knew that it didn't work for the teacher.

R: Yeah. How about the content of each topic, like something you couldn't write, something you had to do?

S: No, the content, because I think with any language programme, it was universal. So when we look at topics like colours, days of the week, introduction, and those are universal, we couldn't go outside of those universal things. It would be too revolutionary to do something different. And then we knew that there were some expression, the everyday expressions that students would need, you know "how do you do?", "my name is", "how much does that cost" so we knew that we had to introduce that to students/young children who were learning language. But we tried to do that in an interesting way, we try to through a little play, little story, through the game, activities that we did chants, we try to make it interesting, and that's why I like the PEP programme, because they were to do some drama, ready to do some fun with the language activities, they would go to a restaurant, you know we try that. I am not sure how other programmes would do it, but at least that we knew that we had to do that, but there were restrictions in the content and also the way... they knew very much the vocabulary that they wanted to do, the letters of the alphabet that we wanted to introduce. They would give the vocabulary, that's how I began the chants, I couldn't write a chant and then say this is your vocabulary. And in language learning, you know in North America, it was called "whole language". At first we read a little story, then you look at the words, that's called whole language, looked at the whole thing, then you look at the sentence, then you look at the words, we couldn't work that way, we had to start with the words, but we wanted to marry those two philosophies, so they look at the whole speech and practice the vocabulary,

rather than memorizing vocabulary without use in context, because that's how English should happen, and we wanted a lot through the ear, so we learn the language too.

R: I noticed that the PEP textbook was financial supported by CIDA.

S: Right

R: And also..

S: I think so, yes.

R: And also Canadian government.

S: Right it was a co-operative venture with two publishers.

R: Was there any special requirements from these two organizations? I mean the government and CIDA.

S: I don't have the exact guidelines for that, but it did have to be a partnership, so they, that's why I went to China so many times, so that's why the educators came here to work, so the funding from the project allowed me to go there and allowed the teachers to come here. And we were, when they were here for a few months, we worked very often together, so those were the requirements of the two funding.

R: Ok, so...

S: And we, and we owned that, because I went to there for a very short period of time, two to three weeks, they came here for a long period of time. We the teachers were here, they were communicating often with China with the publisher, with the teachers, they knew we weren't working independently. They knew mm, we had an idea, they took it back to China, we knew the feedback, and we had to use that feedback, so in that sense the negotiation.

R: Ok. Do they expect something from; I mean the product, like the textbook?

S: In Canada no. Nothing in Canada.

R: Ok.

S: There is no expectation from us, because it was designed for umm, it is really designed for China. Ok? So, I knew they had a, because the government demanded. And the publisher wanted to complete their work within a certain amount of time. I can't remember how many books we did for this series; I think we did two books for each grade, and the tapes as well.

R: Oh, alright.

S: To be honest, you will be a little more familiar with the product; you will be having it in front of you right now.

R: Yes.

S: Are you familiar with the PEP? Yeah. And how successful they were, that part of the research you would have to get from China. We did our job yeah. We were proud of the book. The teachers were fantastic. I love working with them. I don't know if you have ever met with the teachers and talked to them, but they were fantastic.

R: You mean teachers who were involved in writing the book?

S: The teachers who were writing the book and the teachers who were using it in the classroom. At the beginning it was at one district that I spent most of the time with. I wouldn't know the same of the district, sorry.

R: Is it Haidian?

S: Yes, it sound like that. Ye, I think so. The teacher, her English name is Mary. She was great.

R: Is she a teacher in primary school?

S: She was a consultant.

R: Is she one of the writers for the textbook?

S: Yeah, yes.

R: Do you know her Chinese name?

S: Ohh, my god. I don't have that anymore. No I don't. Did you ever speak to Madam Ma and Madam Zhang. They worked for the ministry, oh, they were such good friends, very smart. They were at beginning of the project.

R: So they were from Ministry of Education not PEP?

S: At the time they were in it. Yeah.

R: Do you have their full name by any chance?

S: Oh, no I don't any more. It was a few years ago, and I moved, I don't think I have it. I'll have a look and see if I have cards, I used to keep that information, but I have moved, so I don't have it any more.

R: Okay, it is okay.

S: Yeah, they were at the beginning, and they were fantastic.

R: So she was in Canada for a while right?

S: Yes, she took very good care of me when I was in Beijing. But we worked hard, I had been working at 9.00 o'clock in the morning. It better be good we send people from, it wasn't just me who went different educators, I would go 2 times a year, but we would send some other colleagues, language experts, they would help to write the units too. We tried, that was the collaborative adventure, we tried. Yes.

R: Regarding the cultural values, was there any plans on that, I mean something that needed to be promoted, and something that needed to be avoided?

S: I would say it was very simple, just universal topics, for example, something like food, they would have the food they would eat, we were introducing the words, like fried chicken, French fries, whether you think that's culture. At least we would let them be aware of it, we wanted to do things like animals of course, we wanted to do things like flags, that's another example. I think in each chapter, we try to have a cultural focus, whenever be a meaningful for them, we just don't want to talk, and contemporary too, like a cell phone, so just saying those things as a contemporary and that's part of the culture.

R: I noticed that there are a lot of images for food, but most of them are fast food like hamburgers or coke and French fries.

S: Right, right. I think when we did it, we try everything that's from their familiar table, so it depends on the book, depends on the topic that we were doing.

R: So you mean you just took these foods as the things that they are familiar with?

S: Well, yes, because culturally they wanted to do it, because at that time, I know there are McDonough's in Beijing, but at that time, those are the ones that children will be familiar with. Pizza Hut for example. You know that's universal, it is same here, and in North America. So we were trying to do the common ones that children would need.

R: Was there any debate about if the food is healthy or not? Something like that?

S: Umm, I am not sure, that's something the teacher will deal with, I don't know that we would put that in the programme, but teachers would talk about that, we can only suggest that. But I am not sure if we have a topic about healthy eating and healthy living. But if the theme is about being sick or something, that's the opportunity to talk about you know "healthy living", and the same as food as well. We try to balance about, you know like vegetables, that's a good teacher would talk about that through the topic yes.

R: So there was no debate between the writers?

S: No. No. Does that help you today?

R: Yeah! I have a few more questions though.

S: Sure!

R: Was there some like, Canadian writers though it is something we need to put in, but Chinese writer though it is not appropriate.

S: Not that it wasn't appropriate. But I was going to say there was difficulty. We were trying a poem, but it contains new vocabulary, that they were saying it was too difficult. Like it saying the sky is blue, the grass is green, the sun is yellow, a beautiful sea, so I just wrote that poem in my head, do you like that poem?

R: <laugh>

S: In that poem, I am not saying it was a good poem, but if we didn't learn that vocabulary, we couldn't put it in. So it wasn't the cultural thing, it was more about vocabulary and language, and they would say that's too difficult. So if we introduce new vocabulary or new language patterns, then that would too challenging. And that if we like the poem that would go to work, that would be controlled by the vocabulary. But that we understood that vocabulary had no simpatico pattern to be taught. So that's I would say where the challenges would be. So it wasn't a cultural thing.

R: So you mentioned some cultural things about the world, like which country do you mean?

S: We try to do some, because they knew what their children would be familiar with. If they went out on a trip, first we would use a different part of China. Also we did a pen pal in an Australian kind of thing. But we could not be comprehensive, we couldn't go on geography, but we try to introduce it, especially in the older books.

R: So you mean you took the countries that children would be familiar with?

S: Yea, also the teacher would, they were consulted to do this too. We would introduce mm Mississippi you know, but they don't need to know that. Because that's not the focus of the study that we were teaching. And we wanted it to be comprehensive too.

R: I have a few cultural themes, and can you define them as they were planned to be presented in the textbook? The first one is what I call "Chinese philosophy of education", which means, educators teach children how to be a good person.

S: Yeah, I would say that was a given assumption. So we accepted that very quickly and we were never contradictory on that. There was no need to.

R: Ok. So you think there is no need to?

S: You know we did have it once, you know there is one issue that we have in school today, bullying, racism, because the books are so simple, and we didn't discuss that with any age group of children. We don't know that whether the Chinese curriculum will deal with that, but what happened to the English is that we were dealing with other issues. So we were always about language/vocabulary.

R: Did the Chinese writer think it is important?

S: Yes, of course, that was part of their philosophy, always. So they didn't have to talk about it. That's why I was saying it was an assumption.

R: The second one is respect to elders or teachers.

S: Yes, we had a lot of that, because a lot of activities that we did with the teacher, and conversations that we introduced did show respect to elders and teachers.

R: That's from the Chinese of both?

S: the Chinese side. Of course we believe that too. I just think in terms of textbook, if we introduce that, we had to show that, you never play around about that, we all respect teachers.

R: The third one is obedience.

S: Yeah, I think that's the same thing, obedience also respect.

R: Mmm, how about gender roles? Like girls need to be well behaved? And boys will be (need to be) naughty?

S: Well, we believed in a balance of genders, we try not to, we didn't introduce things like behaviour, so we wouldn't have a naughty boy and a good girl. We wouldn't do that in a story here. Certainly it is simple stage, so we did for sure balance genders, I think when you represent boys and girls, that's our philosophy what you're expecting of boys and girls. And the thing they would do in the activity is they would bring a present, should the boy bring the present or the girl brings the present?

R: Mmm, should that be a boy or a girl?

S: See, that doesn't matter. Could be both, you can give a present anytime.

R: How about adults? Like daddy needs to be the money maker, mummy needs to be the child carer.

S: Yeah, we had to be careful, because we understand there are all kinds of families, and family situations, we go with the majority, and you want to be respectful to those who didn't have a mother, that's a circumstance. Or the mother works, the father does not. We try to have a balance. When we talk about jobs, we would say mother

might be a doctor you know, so if we thought things that might not be very common in Chinese culture, teachers will not put that in just because it might be common in Canada. You know we have unemployment in Canada, we have divorce, those won't be issues that we put in the book.

R: Ok. How about collectivism?

S: Sorry what was that?

R: Collectivism?

S: Oh, that would be emerging in activity; we believe very strongly, that's our philosophy of collaboration and community. By "we", do you mean Canadian writers of Chinese writers?

R: Well, Canadian writer, but in particular writers from Canada who were writing for this programme.

S: We liked the programme that promotes communication that can promote tolerance and respect, and also working together. We call that collators of learning. We were both experts in collators of learning. And Beijing teachers are very interested in these strategies; they were very interested in the time and collaborism strategy of learning. That sort of came in while we were developing the programme. I think that was through activities that we really promoted that. In activities that we did, we try to do collective and community spirit. It is important, it is important in our philosophy. Because the other, that is children only learn by themselves and work by themselves. And we don't like that philosophy. Not we don't like that philosophy, we wanted a balance. Sometimes children should be by themselves, work by themselves. But we like a balance, children work by themselves, but they also work with others.

R: So you mean the Chinese writers prefer to tell children.

S: they were very eager to learn about collaborative learning. There are many strategies in collaborative learning. But it is a little bit harder with younger children. Not harder, but just changes (tend to do) something to the programme.

R: Did they try to show the children that they need to be good, not good, but big boy or a big girl. That they needed to take of themselves?

S: I think sometimes we try to do that through the illustration, because you learn a lot though pictures too. There are pictures out there, I think they would demonstrate and represent that what we would want and have for children. So they would see from pictures another kind of model.

R: Yeah, ok, the next one is patriotism, to China.

S: Yeah, of course, that would be more through activities that the teachers would like to do. It wasn't something that we were mandated to write in. But we certainly respected that as we did that. Yes, for sure.

R: Ok, my last question is about two pictures, the first one is in the, do you remember that I sent you an interview topic guide.

S: Yes, I do.

R: Yeah, there were two pictures, the first one is in grade three, in the garden, the bear was picking up some flowers, and the bear was stopped by the squirrel and charged a 10 dollar fine. What was the story trying to tell children?

S: Yeah, that was you have to respect nature, so that was the story, should you get into trouble that doesn't respect the community, doesn't respect nature. So should you get in trouble if you do something that doesn't respect the community doesn't respect the nature. So we try to do it with a little bit of humour. Well if you do something that is inappropriate so you are going to get a penalty for it. So give children an opportunity to talk about should he charge him or if it ok for squirrel to do that? So we had a little story, each of the story deal with the theme, we wanted a theme for the unit, that was the vocabulary that we are going to use, but we try to make them culturally interesting for the children, so that example you just told me about was a point of discussion because we don't say that it is want you to do it, it is saying that you have to respect the environment. I don't remember the end of the story, but it's done with humour hopefully.

R: Would the teachers be taught to have a discussion with the children in their classes?

S: Yes, we would explain that, some questions they could ask, and some things they could talk about. And a good teacher would know that anyway. But think about that, with any books that you use, if it bothered the teacher, if the teacher was upset by that, she should discuss that with the children and say the book is bad, you know. If something bothered her, but it is a good point to discuss with the children, because you want to encourage their thinking skills, you want to encourage their beliefs, and you want to encourage those values you have been talking about, like respect and collectivism, so it is an opportunity rather than say "oo, this isn't good", it is a good chance to do that, we believe that. And to make up to it, we can put that in the teacher's book, and the teacher may know their children and own beliefs. And she is always following the guide, the lead of the curriculum.

R: Why did you put 10 dollars instead of Chinese money?

S: That would be a Chinese decision; we didn't have any control over the art.

R: You mean the pictures or images?

S: Yes, we didn't have control over that, so we had very little control over the art, we tried, we worked very hard, we had an excellent Canadian artist at the beginning, but we knew that we were working with the Chinese publishers, there will be editors that have to give it to artists, and when the artists is done, they will go back to the editor, and the publisher will make the final decision. But we didn't have much control of the art, from the Canadian point of view. So your question about why that was 10 dollars and wasn't Chinese money, we could recommend it, but they can make a decision.

R: Alright, ok, why do you think it is really hard for the Canadian illustrator to work Chinese ones?

S: Well, it is not that hard, just they had to be careful that for children the pictures give meaning just like words, so if you introduce a new thing that's not there, it is not hard, it is just another way of giving information, giving an idea and giving a story, so sometimes, a great art, a great artist will support the text, there will be a great relationship with the text, but also give new information, we believe it strongly, but we didn't have any control over the art that we chose, because sometimes they have to get it done quickly, sometimes the cost you know, I understand that about publishing.

R: But as a writer also editor, will you give some suggestions like I need this picture.

S: Yes, when I wrote the text, we gave suggestions, but because of the time, because of the distance, maybe you know how much we could be listened to. Anyway, whether the English writer or the Chinese writer, because the publisher is in charge then, I think, that's how it works here, the publisher is in charge. So any author can make a suggestion.

R: Ok, there is another picture in grade five, the daddy monkey is cooking while the mummy monkey is not at home, the daddy looks like he is struggling, and the room is messy.

S: So that is a good way to talk about family values, so I hope there is some humour in the picture too for the children, but you know that's the one we were talking about, who does cooking at home, the mummy or the daddy, I think it is a good issue as the other one, it is a good opportunity for them to talk about, they can survey the children who does cooking at home, are children allowed to cook, you know, I am not sure, are they allowed to cook when there is an adult in the family? If they use hot oven or something? I think it is a good thing for the children to think about, so when you read a book, they want the children to make a connection to their own lives. We talked a lot about it, is it something children will be familiar with? We call that "the text of the self", what does the text, what connection do I have to myself. The other thing is that's why we do need to speak to children, because we want them to see other views, other worlds, other stories that won't be part of their lives, and that's why it is better than the other. They will look at the picture like the cooking and say oo that's just like my own family, or that's stupid, that's silly, my father would never, my mother should you know, that's the discussion and that's the learning, and

children can share their experiences, anytime the children can share their experiences, the text has been successful. Then when they get to talk about the experiences about others without living around them, then we have good language opportunities.

R: So you mean the teacher with familiar scene or something like that.

S: Well, they could be, yeah cooking is a familiar scene. About who does it in their houses may be different, maybe there is a stereotype, the stereotype maybe the mother is cooking while the father is watching TV, that is the stereotype, but we didn't want to have only stereotypes.

R: Yes, so.

S: So that's part of the contradiction, because it has to be something that is familiar with children, but also show them other views.

R: But do you think, if there is no chance for children to discuss the story, maybe the result is the story suggesting something to the children?

S: No I don't think so, because you know my philosophy, they are going to get another story, it is not going to damage them, it is just a learning opportunity, but the teacher is going to spend time with them, she should make the most of the opportunity, so I am not worried in any way, because it is always trustful thing that there is another story. But I don't want anybody to criticize the exenterate because it is not real. That is the challenge of the publisher to represent, if they have the mother yelling at the father, and the kid had a knife in his hand, that wouldn't be suitable, you know. These kinds of stories in the world are real, but we don't want to put that in the book. So in that sense, the publisher can only go so far. But if the teacher doesn't like something, that why they use experts, that way they hopefully contributed to the success, and hopefully, it was a good partnership, and that's why they go abroad to have a partnership.

APPENDIX 6 : Interview Sample 2

Researcher: R, Interviewee: L

R: Requirements regarding cultural awareness have been mentioned quite a few times in China's new English subject curriculum for basic education. However, two expressions have been used. One is the "differences between China and the western culture", and the other is the "difference between China and foreign culture". How come two different expressions are used in this document/curriculum policy?

L: For these expressions, maybe the consistency of the expressions in this document was not paid enough attention to. Curriculum design is a complicated process. The writing of this document was divided into several parts. A few people were involved in taking charge of various parts. Also due to time constraints, a problem/mistake like this may be made. In the new revised edition which has been submitted to the Ministry of Education in 2008, the expression "difference between China and foreign culture" was used.

R: In terms of "foreign culture", do you have a specific idea, about which countries you mean?

L: Not really, just the world outside China.

R: So in the textbooks, editors would put special effort on covering other countries' culture, such as Asia, Africa, Arabian countries, and Southern America and Western countries?

L: By textbooks, which level do you mean? Secondary, primary...

R: Primary.

L: I cannot recall textbooks of People's Education Press. It shouldn't be only about Western countries.

R: You know there is a volume of textbooks called "New Version English".

L: I don't know much about this volume. Do you use this volume as your sample?

R: Yes, I also use a volume called "PEP English". Compared to other PEP English is used by more schools. New Version English is not as popular as PEP English.

L: Because this volume of textbooks was produced slightly later, it wasn't included in the first group of textbooks which passed the censorship and authorised by the Ministry of Education. The first group of textbooks were submitted in 2000 and included in the book list in 2001. PEP English is one of the first group of textbooks. In the 2001 curriculum, primary schools are required to provide English language lessons as one of the compulsory subjects. So those textbooks (first group) were

submitted to the censorship committee in 2000. And primary schools started to use these textbooks since 2001. The process, which includes submitting for censorship, authorization and publishing, normally takes about 1 year. In terms of the use of different expressions, unreservedly, it is a clerical error. Due to time constraints, maybe the consistency of expressions in this document was not paid enough attention to. In the writing of the second draft [more than 5 years after the publication of draft one], we finally got chance to revise it through, so the quality considering expression use will be better this time.

R: In the pedagogy requirement, a few teams were mentioned such as “the most important English speaking country” in level 2, “the most important sports or entertaining activities in the world”, “the most popular drinks”, and “the main English speaking countries”.

L: Are they in the culture section?

R: Yes, the cultural awareness section. For example, “the most important”, what is the standard for it?

L: In terms of this (the most important), there is no strict standard for it. It depends on the process of textbook design. You know, talking about the content standard, for example in the US; it is designed by each State. However, in China, provincial educational authorities are not able to design their own content standard, so the national curriculum provides a content standard for them. In this case, an enumeration (i.e. of cultural information) is not considered the best method, because it is almost impossible to cover every option. So we left this task to textbook designers, when in fact, in theory, this task is supposed to be handed to local educational authorities. Currently, we are not capable to do so. Apart from Shanghai city, no province has its own syllabus. It supposed to be like this: there is a national curriculum framework, and each province is given freedom to design their content standard, and each school has their own practical syllabus. Shanghai has its own independent syllabus which is not based on the current national syllabus. Talking about implementation of curriculum, in China, the Foreign Language School in Hangzhou is doing a great job. The designing of a school based curriculum/syllabus is under process there. Australian experts pointed out that, the essence of curriculum is class policy.

R: As you mentioned earlier, no content given is because of the concern of limitation of information. Will you communicate with textbook editors in terms of cultural issues?

L: No one in publishing has ever communicated with the curriculum design team. But the fact is that only very few curriculum designers haven’t been involved in textbook design. It led to a more exact interpretation of the curriculum in textbook production. I was involved in the textbook design in foreign language teaching and research press.

R: So, in the practice of textbook design, in terms of “the most important”, what kind of example will you give in your textbooks?

L: We would make the decision with the consideration of various dimensions. For example, entertainment and sports, we didn’t pay much attention on entertainment, but for sports, we would choose things like the Olympic Games. For entertainment, in textbooks for junior middle school, we chose “Ronald’s day” which is a charity activity as well. We also introduced some movies, but didn’t introduce the Oscar award. In our textbooks for junior middle school, we have a section which is called “around the world” in each unit. We introduced cultural knowledge in this section which is considered as an attachment to the main part. In textbooks for primary school, cultural information was delivered along the provision of language knowledge. We paid more attention on cultural information, such as festivals. For western cultures, we chose some special event, for example “Thanks Giving Day”. Of course, religious information was eliminated; we thought it was valuable for Chinese students however. In textbooks for middle school, when we were describing Chinese Spring Festival, we also introduced “how people from other countries celebrate Chinese Spring Festival”. We introduced how people celebrate Chinese spring festival in four different countries.

R: So you mean, it is not like only western cultures were chosen?

L: Absolutely not. <laugh>. Today what we promote is global awareness, rather than western awareness.

R: When it mentions “the main English speaking countries”, what countries does that encompass?

L: First of all, we meant countries where English is used as an official language, for example, UK, US Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. In fact, we have particularly paid a lot of attention to South Africa, because of its special bond with China. I have seen quite a few volumes of textbooks cover information about South Africa. The first black president of South Africa is always mentioned. I recall that youth in South Africa was mentioned in one article.

R: How about Asian countries?

L: I consider Asian countries as another issue/category, because it is not easy to consider them as English speaking countries, such as India and Singapore. So, in fact we would pay more attention to English speaking countries.

R: was the education reform of 2000 considered as the gist of curriculum design?

L: In 1999, the State council launched a document regarding the further promotion of essential qualities orientated education (EQO) after a national educational conference. This document provided a timeframe for building up a new curriculum system within 10 years. In China’s political condition, a document, which is launched by the State Council, is always considered as the highest levelled document/decision/policy.

<laugh>. Documents stated by the Ministry of Education are one level below...<checking the policy document>. Ok, it doesn't say 10 years' time. It mentions the adjustment and reformation of the structure and content of current curriculum, establishment of a new curriculum system, and implementation of curriculum at various levels (national, local and school based) and change of the overemphasis on subject knowledge. This document serves as a guiding principle and a foundational policy for the 8th educational reformation. Under this circumstance, the Ministry of Finance would appropriate funds to support the curriculum reformation. So, it is a national action rather than a ministerial action. The 8th educational reform was led by a few reasons such as the global changes in the educational field. In the 1920/30s, the phrase of "teaching syllabus" was replaced by "curriculum standard" in China, according to the American model. Later, due to the influence of the Soviet Union, "teaching syllabus" was reused in the Chinese educational field. This time, considering the global background, teaching syllabus was replaced by curriculum standard again. In this case, it is not fair to say that we have abandoned teaching syllabus by building up a curriculum standard system. It is only a return towards curriculum standard system.

Theoretically, the theoretical foundation of the term "curriculum standard" is more popular, compared with "teaching syllabus". Teaching syllabus serves as a pedagogical guideline for teachers. Curriculum systems cover more dimensions including schools, educational administration, school management, teaching and learning, assessment and examination. The curriculum reform has reached its middle stage. It faces some implementation difficulties, or should we say limitations. More administrative effort should be made to ensure a successful policy implementation. Currently, we face a new situation. An educational development outline which was started up in 2005 is under progress. Last year, this project on educational development outline was changed to "a middle/long term educational reformation and development outline", the 8th educational reformation will reach a new stage or even move into a new education reform. The 8th educational reform helped the design of the "2020 outline" in many ways. For example, the issue of cross-national education. Before the launch of the current curriculum, the Ministry of Education established an "internal" framework for education reform which didn't literally mention cross-cultural education. However, until now, in the designing process of this "2010 outline", now we can see a complete term as cross cultural education already. Thus, it may be an important part of the educational policy in the future. Or it may also be adjusted in the emendation process, if some leaders consider this term as inappropriate. But what we can see is, it is positive for the "cross cultural education" to be a part of education in China. In the process of curriculum design, I would say the designers worked very seriously. For example, for each concept, it may be explained in a paragraph which contains about 100 words. The designing of one "100 word paragraph" may take a whole days discussion to ensure it is expressed in an appropriate way. Also, there were always three/four/five designers involved in the writing of drafts for one paragraph. They would come out with different versions which were used in the discussion section. Thus, the second draft (which has just been submitted to the MoE for evaluation) is correspondingly precise in terms of discourse in the document.

R: How was the curriculum policy implemented after its design?

L: It will be launched by the Ministry of Education in China. Local educational administration will hold training programmes to promote this new policy. In most places, each English language teacher will be given a copy of the policy document to help them understand the new policy and its changes. The promotion of curriculum policy will be carried out through trainings at various levels. For example, MoE will organize national training. Senior/experienced teachers all over the country may attend the training and share the training experience of what they learnt with teachers in their cities, to make sure that every single classroom teacher is trained. In addition, the promotion of new curriculum also went along with the promotion of textbooks. With the curriculum reform, to meet the criteria of the new curriculum, new textbooks were produced. The MoE took this as a great opportunity. Thus, publishers were encouraged to promote the new English curriculum during their textbook training activities for classroom teachers. So, textbook workshops which are organized by publishers, an explanation of current curriculum policy will normally be carried out. In other words, a textbook training workshop usually starts with a curriculum interpretation/explanation section. However, this led to a complexion that some publishers use curriculum policy to explain their textbooks. The textbook actually didn't fully present a certain part of the curriculum. As I mentioned earlier, the learning strategy and culture in many textbooks for primary education have no clear cultural section. So it is not an affixation. There are various ways to teach cultural information. Providing a cultural add-on section is a fairly popular way to do so in secondary educational textbooks. Considering primary school pupils' development of cognition, more publishers chose another way which is merging cultural information into the text. In this case, pupils get the chance to understand/experience culture alongside their language learning. Also, as we always say, cultural learning has multiple purposes. One of the reasons why we need to learn culture from other countries is that there are some aspects of Chinese culture that we want to change. But for many other things, we just want to understand them rather than "learn them". For example Christmas, we have said several times, it is just something we want to know about.

R: In terms of culture, what kind of cultural information do Chinese students need to learn about?

L: It is a bit complicated. If we do a comparison between cultures, if we are conscious about Chinese culture, people may realise that there is something existing within Chinese culture which limits the development of Chinese society. Such as democracy of equality. In some of our activities in our textbooks, pupils are required to make their own standards rather than simply follow the standard which was made by teachers. For example, I recall that when we teach numbers in our textbooks, we ask pupils to make age badges for them to emphasize the idea of "responsibility". As we understand it, it does not signify "responsibility" when a western child wears an age badge for their birthday. But parents may tell the child that you should be more responsible because you grow another year older. For birthday, what Chinese children receive may just be food or toys. Only very few children may say that I would have to take more responsibilities because I am one year older now. So we

think, Chinese children may be spoiled by their parents. Chinese children should be more responsible in terms of kinship. Today, when we make principles for governmental leaders, obligation to parents/family is always emphasised. Why is it always included in principles? Because we think there are problems regarding this issue (kinship). So we think it is necessary to emphasise this in our textbooks. Also we may present different thinking strategy to pupils. We think that some of our dominant thinking strategy is rather dogmatic. People tend to use some dogmatic phrases as evidence of their opinion. For example, people may say that “it is important to learn English because Karl Marx said English can be used a weapon for revolution”. Teachers always say this, but no one would evaluate this evidence and see it as good enough support for your idea. They would say that everyone’s saying it. But it makes sense that we need a more empiricist evidence. In western culture, personal experience is emphasised. I am not saying that only empiricist evidence is valued, but it is dominant. For example, if you want to tell a person that Xi’an city is so interesting by saying that it is an old city that is not enough. You would have to tell this person something like, you may go to see Terra-cotta Warriors and Horses, and then you may find one warrior which looks exactly like you, then this person might be persuaded to go and visit Xi’an. So we would pay attention on “empiricist evidence/experience” in our text books. We would promote things like this through activities.

It is important for textbook editors to build cultural awareness. It is more important than anything else. Then they will know how to insert cultural awareness in activities in textbooks. So when you analyse a textbook, you may not only pay attention to things with cultural labels, but also have a look of sections as activities which don’t have cultural labels. It is what happened in teacher training as well. Now there is a method. The MoE made a website which allows all teachers to get access to training which is provided by the MoE at the same time, to avoid the information loss during the trainings at various levels. We can see that the “information loss” through training at various levels (eg national training, provincial training and local training) led to “misleading and misinterpretation” of curriculum. I believe that with the implementation of curriculum policy we will be more experienced and more technology will be used in the future.

During the implementation of curriculum reform many problems that we have at the moment were caused by the lack of “policy awareness” and the consideration of the cost of promoting a new policy. For example the MoE didn’t provide enough funding on the teaching training for new curriculum. However, publishers were encouraged to provide teaching training in terms of curriculum changes. So publishers may interpret the same curriculum differently in order to promote/sell their own products. This may lead to the misinterpretation of curriculum which is a rather serious problem, especially in some sections like “culture and strategy”. In terms of “cultural awareness” many publishers didn’t do a good job in their textbook design because they simply adapted textbooks from English speaking countries. Many textbooks do not actually cover any section about learning strategy or activities about it. But they would describe sections or activities in their textbooks as activities for learning strategy.

We believe that cultural awareness plays an important part in students' English language learning because a good understanding of culture will help students use English language well. In the first paragraph of our English language curriculum it states that cultural awareness is the grounds of language learning. So there are two aims: one is cultural education, the other one is the building of comprehensive language ability. However in many textbooks the cultural sections are designed as separated parts which are not interacted with linguistic knowledge and activities. Considering this issue, PEP English's editors did a fairly good job. There are some native speakers involved in their textbooks editing work, so maybe this issue was paid more attention to.

In terms of textbook design, a fresh mind about culture is necessary. For example, as a Chinese person, sometimes we cannot interpret certain cultural signals because we are not familiar with the situation. Even for some foreign editor, sometimes if they have been living in China for too long, they get used to the culture; they will lose the cultural insight too. So I would suggest these foreign editors to not stay in China for more than one month each time they come here. Otherwise, they will be just like Chinese people and lose their specialities on original/authentic language and cultural awareness which we need the most, and we need them to check if activities make sense.

R: As I understand it, there are also requirements on Moral Education which take in Chinese culture. So do you think that introducing foreign cultures in English language subject has an impact on pupils' learning of Chinese culture?

L: It must affect the learning of Chinese culture, but it is unavoidable. Culture contact will definitely lead to culture shock; and one culture will impact on the learning of the other one. However, we believe that it is meaningless to have a culture contact without culture shock. The variety and differences between cultures lead to the production of culture shock. It is necessary to keep cultural variety because human beings will eventually lose the ability to be creative. Thus we believe that it is important to have a worldwide sight to view Chinese culture. We know that there are many valuable heritages in Chinese history and culture, however, these are also some "old wives tales" or traditions which act as restrictions for the development of China in the current era. The aim of introducing English language to all Chinese pupils is not training them to say "hello", but helping them to build the worldwide sight to allow them to get access to and experience foreign cultures and to realise the differences between cultures. At least children should get chances to know that "it is okay to be different and there are always alternatives". At least pupils should learn how to respect other cultures and be understanding. As I always say the reason there are so many angry youth in China – actually they are not youth, this group of people are actually lead by a lot of middle aged people who are ultra-Nationalists, is that most of these people are not capable to speak foreign language well. I have met many people who have strong attitudes against English language teaching and learning. These people are not good at speaking English at all themselves. They had experience of learning English or they failed to learn and use English so they didn't get any benefit from learning this language. This may be one of the grounds of their criticisms. Perhaps, the old model of English teaching and

learning which emphasises using English as a tool rather than a window to see the world partly caused such a situation. English teaching and learning in China is so important because we hope children can know more about the world rather than stuck in China and only knowing things which happen in this country. This aim is even more important than the capability to say “hello”.

R: Will educational administration have requirements on textbook design?

L: Yes, there is censorship for textbook design. Many educational experts and scholars are involved in this censorship. They know what they are doing. Also, textbook production is one part of the sounding board which is related to ideology and administrated by our propaganda. Within the concern of ideology, textbook editors will evaluate their work carefully with a Chinese view first, to ensure a certain article or activity is suitable for the Chinese pupils academic improvement or the development of Chinese society. For example, I always say that it is not appropriate to translate Christmas to “Shen dan jie” (birthday of a saint). It would be better if it can be called “ye dan jie (Jesus’ birthday), which is closer to its original meaning. In Buddhism, there are more than 20 “Shen dan jie”. Thus it is not fair to call Christmas the birthday of a saint and replace another saint with this very one. With the consideration of “all religions should be equally treated”, this current translation of Christmas actually deprives Buddhists of their religious rights. It is very disrespectful to Buddhists or Muslims. The word Sheng (Saint) carries special meaning in Chinese language and culture. Thus we consider how to introduce which culture is suitable for the development of Chinese society to pupils. It does not mean that we hope all cultures come to China because not all cultures are positive. Even if we bring in all positive cultures from other countries, it is impossible for Chinese people to take them all in. We have our own cultural background which is unchangeable. Based on such a cultural background, what do we want to change? So China should have its own cultural strategy or at least be aware of how to import foreign culture, we can’t say that our ideology is the same as the official ideology, because it is not easy to find a written list of official ideology. But we know that we should do to evaluate a certain culture regarding if it is positive.

R: So with your understanding, what kind of global awareness do you want pupils to build?

L: This question is slightly complicated if you are interested you may have a look at my PhD thesis. I wrote a few cultural attitudes. I discussed the objective cultural attitude. Sometimes Chinese people hold very subjective cultural attitudes towards Western culture. For example, some Chinese men always call Japanese people “little Japanese”. I don’t think it is appropriate. Also some people think it is not fair that the UK calls itself Great Britain. I would like to say that you don’t have to understand this “great” as grand/wonderful. It is just like London and Greater London which is slightly bigger than the former one. That’s it. So I think here our teachers should put more effort teaching our children to ... the social status of teachers have fallen down a lot. According to an online survey people think teachers are no longer reliable these days. I don’t think we are capable to make changes in

society. But what we can do is teaching our pupils/students and ensures that they have a better understanding (about the issue that I mentioned earlier).

R: Do you think it is necessary for textbook editors and authors to be objective on cultural attitude?

L: Yes of course. You have chosen textbooks produced by the People's Education Press to analyse, so your findings will be very positive for sure. If you go and have a look at textbooks with fewer users, you may find many problems.

R: To be honest, so far, I don't think the result is very positive.

L: Generally, PEP Press's textbooks are quite positive.

R: I have haven't been through activities, but regarding obvious cultural sections, there are a few examples, eg, all children celebrate children's day in the world.

L: Oh, this is not quite accurate.

R: And the fish flag for children's day in Japan, but actually the fish flag is for boys only.

L: Yes.

R: So I am thinking, what is the basis of the cultural information? Who decided whether it was important or not? And what information/references are used to prove a certain thing is considered as the best, the most popular and the symbol of a certain place, city or country?

L: It is decided by the textbook editors. It depends on the volume of the textbook. It is a creation of each volume. For our textbook, we didn't take such an obvious model (a section as culture link). In our textbook design process we paid a lot of attention on "sequence/scope" such as what information will be covered. To make a decision many factors were considered such as the length of content. Sometimes, for one point, it is not easy to make it clear within the limited space. So we would go for something which is easier to present and explain. The importance of a certain cultural element always comes first. The evaluation of importunacy is based on a few dimensions such as reference in English speaking countries. For example if I want to choose an important festival, I may have a look at the calendar of the United States, and see what festivals or bank holidays have been listed there. So this is kind of official reference for festivals or festivals which are recognised by society. This is a way to show the importance of festivals. Secondly, there are many related researches done in China. For example, there is a cultural dictionary. I would use these researches and have a look if they mentioned the festival that I have chosen and see how they introduce them. Also we would discuss with language experts who are native speakers and decide the perspective of this introduction. For example, when I introduce Christmas I did a comparison between Christmas and Chinese New Year. I understand that Christmas and Chinese New Year do not share the same history. But

we want to reduce the religious influence of Christmas, so we put them together. Of course, some editors put these 2 together because they think these are the most important festivals to some extent. But I introduced thanks giving day separately because I feel that this festival carries more positive meanings. I won't however encourage pupils to thank God. The textbook only covers things that we say in thanks giving day. This is how we chose the topics, and the next is "design" including activity design. I would pay a lot of attention to cultural thinking. I would add some activities which Chinese students are not familiar with such as crosswords, word puzzles, word maps and bingo. My aim was to encourage students to think out of the box. This is led by our thinking mode. I won't tell students that "hey, let's do a cultural activity". But when I was designing such an activity it was culturally orientated. I won't emphasise this (cultural orientation) to classroom teachers, because they don't have to know/understand this. We will instruct them to encourage pupils to think out of the box, and encourage them to think creatively. I believe that when we learn culture from the Western world it is not about learning general culture but the learning/adoption of different thinking modes. We need to know how to view the world from various perspectives. I am not saying that our thinking mode is not right.

R: When you design an activity which is brand new pupils, do you think classroom teachers may find it difficult to use/teach because there are western cultures and thinking modes involved in this activity?

L: Yes, indeed that's why we will organise some teacher training event, and train teacher to use these activities. As mentioned earlier, we won't say that this is a cultural activity. We just say that this is an interesting activity which pupils have never been involved with before, they may find it very interesting. During the process, there are a few things that you need to pay attention to...

R: Why don't you tell the classroom teacher the "cultural orientation" in the activities?

L: One of the important reasons is that, most primary school English teachers are unqualified; their major might not be English language. A large amount of English subject teacher were transferred from other subjects; they may have difficulties speaking English themselves. So if you tell them all these complicated and detailed information about a certain activity, they may feel that it is so hard to carry on this course and be afraid of teaching English. Today, a "blended approach" is used in English teaching in many primary schools in China. But actually we had no choice. Many teachers would like to play DVD/ tape for pupils rather than reading the texts themselves to avoid misleading the pupils. Also things like tones/accents are all parts of culture, so we would like our pupils to experience and learn from our original ones too. To be honest, the process of textbook design is a research process. We would discuss and evaluate every single decision/choice that we made.

R: Do you mean when you design the framework?

L: Yes. When I design textbooks, every time, we would spend months on the evaluation of the sequence of units. This (NV English) textbook, I am not sure if they have a Singaporean version. For the old, there was a Singaporean version which was used in Singapore. Based on the Singaporean version....

R: As I understand, before current NV English, back to the old days when PEP Press monopolised textbook production.

L: Yes, there was a Singaporean version, and based on this, a national English textbook for China was designed.

Teaching pupils to be good citizens is an important principle. But in our textbooks, we won't make it too obvious. It won't be something like "you should respect elders and parents", but we have "you should follow the traffic rules" and "you should help people who are in need."

R: Is it something required/stated by the curriculum/ standard or common sense?

L: I don't think curriculum requires something like this. Is this the only cultural link in this book?

R: No, normally there are two of them.

L: Ok. If I was the editor, I would try to focus on things that Chinese pupils should improve on things they are not taught all the time in other classes. Moral Education does not act as a major part in the English Language subject, but is a necessary/essential part. Because the English subject is a part of schooling, it takes the responsibility that schooling takes.

R: You mentioned "behaviour", such as "respect teachers and parents", will "obedience" be considered as "behaviour issue"?

L: "Obedience" is not covered in our textbook.

R: In a sense of "social rules" (obey social rules), was "obedience" emphasised in PEP and NV textbooks.

L: We have covered things like "obey traffic rules". It is not compulsory, but we had the opportunity to learn about it through available texts. For example, we learnt "turn left", "turn right", and "green light" and "red light". Then we can talk about traffic rules.

R: How about "collectivism" or "teamwork"?

L: Plenty of it, because have activities. This one is expressed through activities. Chinese children and children from other countries have their own advantages (something that they are good at) and children can work together. Today, most English textbooks (in China) follow this approach. There are a few main characters

including Chinese children and western children in textbooks. They carry on many activities, and take charge of different parts of tasks.

R: How about “patriotism” or “love to nation”?

L: Yes, they will be covered, but not obviously. We want pupils to learn these kinds of things unconsciously. For example, we mentioned “Yang Liwei”, “The Great Wall”, and even some traditional Chinese stories.

R: Is it required by the Office of Moral Education (of the MoE)?

L: Yes, sort of. But mostly our textbook design was based upon curriculum.

R: Would you evaluate the illustration in textbooks?

L: We would check the illustrations; maps used in textbooks will be strictly examined by national censorship. Illustrations will also be checked by textbook censorship. For example, I remember that we had a picture of a foreign child up a tree. It was rejected because of health and safety reasons. So we had to change this picture. For us, there is no strict standard about illustrations, such as how much space Chinese children should take, or how much children from other countries can take. Mostly what we consider is that how this illustration can be helpful in English language learning and teaching.

R: How about gender?

L: We had a clear idea about this since the beginning no matter nationalities; children’s images are presented as both boys and girls. It won’t be like only girls or only boys. Because our textbooks cover 6 years English study, to ensure the consistency, each character in our textbooks has his or her own personality. This personality might carry the social expectation of gender. But mostly they are what we have abstracted from real students’ personalities. It is a kind of description rather than instruction/induction. For example, a boy character who might be a bit naughty. There is no judgement in it. We won’t portray boys’ images as more creative than girls. But they may be a bit clumsy, such as “falling over sometimes and getting hurt”. It is not appropriate to portray a girl as someone who falls over and gets hurt all the time, because girls may be more careful. There are some clumsy girls, but compared to boys, generally, boys may be clumsier. So we would like to portray a typical situation.

R: How about adults? I have seen pictures in PEP English; mother may be cooking whilst father is reading the newspaper.

L: Actually, that was one of the questions that we have considered a lot. Sometimes, we designedly put pictures as “father is cooking while mother is reading the newspaper”. Mother is watching TV while father is calling Granny. Special attention was paid on this issue. For each activity, we would evaluate it with the consideration of ideology.

R: Do you think Chinese pupils have the opportunity to carry on the discussion about gender roles in the classroom?

L: Due to pupils' language capabilities they are not able to carry on such a discussion regarding who should be cooking at home. In reality, we may ask pupils "who cooks in their home", or "when father/mother cooks". Regarding the question "who cooks at home", it varies. In some areas (such as Shanghai), the father may cook at home. The social status of women may be higher than that of men before the Open Door policy. Current social status of women and men are based on economic status. There is a difference existing between men and women. These differences have to be faced. There is no point to seek absolute equality of everything. We would pay attention on gender rules and gender equality in textbooks. But I don't see it necessary to present an absolute equality between men and women. We respect, understand and accept gender differences.

R: Do you think Chinese educators and administrators can understand the differences when they view the world? Do they recognise the difference or searching for "same" under the impression of "being the same"?

L: This is a kind of common situation, most of our educational policy makers are not educational philosophers. More or less they are politicians. You may not be able to find out many departmental directors in the MoE who have been trained in educational philosophy. In this case, when they make the policy, they may consider the same issue from a political perspective. After all, politicians are not educators. So we hope that, educational issues/questions can be left to educators to deal with and vice versa. However, the current situation is one person might take multi-responsibilities. It is a bit complicated. The coming educational reform policy may give more freedom to schools, such as choice of textbooks. Universities can choose their own textbooks, but primary and secondary schools are not allowed to do so.

R: Yes, with the consideration of exams ...

L: No, it is not about exams ... it is quite complicated. Firstly, the textbooks for basic education are free for students, financially supported by the Government. For example, the Central Government gives 6.40 Yuan per student in a certain province. And the education administration in this province would invite bidding for textbooks. And a certain press may win the bidding with a price of 3.20 Yuan (per student). And they can spend the rest of the 3.20 Yuan (per student) on something else.

It is not about exams; actually none of the university entrance exams in China were planned with the consideration of a certain volume of textbooks. It is based on curriculum.

R: NV English mentioned "national sports" ... It looks like editors are seeking for similarities.

L: Well, editors should be more careful here I suppose. If I was the designer, I would put “most popular sports” here. Also, in English, there is no such thing as “National Sports”.

... it is PEP Press’s tradition to provide such a long list of editors. Actually you still don’t know who was in charge.

R: The curriculum mentions that “enhance the understanding of native nation”. By “native nation”, does that mean “Chinese nation”?

L: Yes, basically, it means “Chinese nation”. Also it can be “minority group”. We emphasise that the self-awareness of native culture should be improved during the process of second language learning. Professor Fei Xiatong said that the self-awareness of native culture can be improved through experiencing other cultures.